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Memoirs of
Friedrich Ferdinand Count von Beust

MEMOIRS

OF

FRIEDRICH FERDINAND

COUNT VON BEUST

Written by Himself

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION

CONTAINING PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF COUNT BEUST'S CAREER AS PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRIA AND AUSTRIAN AMBASSADOR IN LONDON

BY

BARON HENRY DE WORMS, M.P.

TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

SECOND EDITION

H70H9
30/11/99

London
REMINGTON & CO., PUBLISHERS
HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN

1887

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[*An Alphabetical Index to this Work will be found at end of this Volume.*]

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1867

THE COMPROMISE WITH HUNGARY.—CONTINUATION OF THE EXTRAORDINARY REICHSRATH.—CONFLICT WITH COUNT BELCREDI.—HIS RETIREMENT.—RE-ENACTMENT OF THE FEBRUARY CONSTITUTION.

I MUST begin this chapter by saying that I wrote it after 1870, but inserted subsequent additions, and that I can guarantee the exactitude of all the facts narrated.

The Hungarian Reichstag met on the 19th of November 1866, and received an Imperial Missive to the effect that his Apostolic Majesty had resolved to give due consideration to its demands and claims.

The common affairs of the entire monarchy that were to be discussed were specified, and the Emperor expressed a desire that the Reichsrath should examine the proposals impartially and with due consideration of the dangers which were threatening the State. The Imperial Government had strong hopes that Déak and the majority would be inclined to come to an agreement. Tisza and the Left, on the other hand, were not yet satisfied with the offers made by his Majesty and the Ministry, because it was not clear whether Count Belcredi's Federal system or my scheme of Dualism would prevail. But in order to make both parties as contented as possible, and to bring the Agreement with the Hungarian representatives to a speedy conclusion, it was decided in the Council of Ministers of the 17th of November 1866, the Emperor presiding, that the Minister of State and the Hungarian Chancellor should issue a rescript which would be even more in conformity with the views of the Hungarian Diet, only reserving unity of the Army and of Foreign Affairs, joint administration of the customs and of finance, and the revival of the provincial governors, etc. At the same time the prospect was held out of a responsible Hungarian Ministry. The offer was accepted, but without giving satisfaction.

In the middle of December the Court Chancellor Majlath came to tell me that the Emperor wished me to go to Pesth, that Count Belcredi was of a different opinion, and that it would be a guarantee for the latter if he, Majlath, were to accompany me. I had

no objection to this, especially as I was very partial to Majlath, and I was not offended at feeling myself under a sort of police supervision. We left Vienna in the evening, arriving early in the morning at Buda, where we took up our quarters with Baron Sennyey. After a few hours' rest, we started on foot for Pesth. On leaving my room, Majlath said to me: 'I see you have your hat on.' 'I always take my hat when going out,' I replied. 'But why a silk hat? You have a very handsome fur cap?' 'I will wear it with pleasure,' I said, 'if you prefer it.' Thus I paid my visits to the notabilities at Pesth with my fur cap. Majlath had put on his Hungarian breeches immediately after his arrival. It was a beautiful winter's day, and the hill of Buda was covered with snow and ice, so that I had an opportunity of getting accustomed to the slippery ground.

We visited the leaders of the various parties—Eötvös, Cziraki, George Apponyi, and lastly Déak. I cannot say that I received a very cordial welcome from Déak; his language was rather abrupt, but he was not disagreeable in manner, and he was very frank in expressing his opinions. As we were leaving, Majlath said to me: 'I daresay you did not think him over polite.' 'Indeed I did,' said I; 'he actually helped me on with my coat.' 'Oh!' exclaimed Majlath, 'that meant a great deal.'

Sennyey gave a dinner in the evening. Andrassy, Lonyay, and Eötvös were seated opposite to me, and I remarked that I was an object of close scrutiny. I insisted on our returning by the night train to Vienna

our visit not lasting more than the day, in order that the newspapers should not invent stories about negotiations. Accordingly, after dinner, we left the house of Baron Sennyey, whose hospitality, enhanced by the amiability of his beautiful wife, I shall never forget.

All things considered, my reception on my first appearance in Hungary did not justify Majlath's apprehensions on account of Teleki.* A very friendly article had previously appeared in the *Pesti Naplo*, saying that the last rescript should be received with confidence, as I, to whose name the sympathies and the hopes of nations were attached, had accepted the responsibility of it.

The next morning, immediately after our return, I was summoned to the Emperor. His Majesty was impatient to know my impressions. I took the liberty of expressing them in the following words: 'I have witnessed,' said I to the Emperor, 'since I have been here, nothing but a useless exchange of rescripts sent to Pesth, and of resolutions and addresses sent here in return. This will not advance matters. Your Majesty has expressed the determination to appoint a Hungarian Ministry under certain conditions, and you have already chosen the men who are to form that Ministry. It would be well if your Majesty were to summon them to Vienna, in order that we might negotiate with them here.' The Emperor took my advice, and Andrassy, Eötvös, and Lonyay were invited to come to Vienna. This was the beginning—I may say the decisive beginning—of

* See vol. i. p. 338.

the establishment of the Agreement, and in 1867 and 1868 Andrassy said to me more than once : ' If it had not been for you, the Agreement would never have been completed.'

The negotiations were held alternately at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that of the Interior. I, who had only come two months previously to Austria, was indeed able to bring them to a speedy conclusion by intervening as the diplomatic member of the conference, but the chief task fell to the lot of the Minister of State. I was of opinion that the Minister of Commerce, Baron Wüllerstorf, and the representative of the Ministry of Finance, Baron Becke (who was at that time not yet a Minister) should take part in the conference, but Count Belcredi would not hear of this. After we had concluded our labours, arrangements were made for the appointment of the Hungarian Ministry, and it was decided that, as soon as the scheme was accepted by Parliament, the Coronation should take place.

While the Hungarian compromise was thus being perfected, affairs had also assumed a new aspect in the western half of the empire.

When I came into office the Constitution was still suspended, much to my dissatisfaction, as parliamentary life was light and air to me. This state of things became absolutely intolerable when the seventeen Diets met in the course of November 1866. The *Charivari*, which ridiculed the simultaneous discussion of general political questions at Vienna, Prague, Brünn and Innsbruck, instructed me more than it

annoyed me.* An incident in the South Austrian Diet, however, when the late Deputy Mühlfeld attacked me without any cause, made patience and silence impossible. I myself could not reply, and the governor merely remarked that he 'could say nothing, as the party attacked was absent!' After this occurrence I declared very firmly to Count Belcredi that I was accustomed to be attacked, but not to leave my defence to others, and that I must insist on the summoning of the Reichsrath.

Numerous conferences ensued, and the result was that an extraordinary Reichsrath was convoked. This step has been blamed as a violation of the Constitution; but for my part I preferred a Reichsrath of doubtful legality to none at all.

I must say in all sincerity that I could not at first understand the reproach of unconstitutional action that was made against me. The suspension of the Constitution having lasted more than a year, and being, as the word 'suspension' implied, a provisional measure, the summoning of a Reichsrath for the purpose of consultation could not be condemned as equivalent to a Coup d' État. At the same time a feeling of opposition to the meeting of the extraordinary Reichsrath was shown so unmistakably by the populace of Vienna, that I well remember one of the leaders of the Bohemian Diet saying to me: 'We must think twice as to whether we

* The *Figaro* had a very clever cartoon. It represented seventeen organ-grinders performing in the Ballplatz, and myself at a window, stopping up my ears, and exclaiming in the Saxon dialect: 'Goodness gracious! I never came across anything like this at Dresden!'

should go to Vienna under the present circumstances, and expose ourselves to insults.' However, it was not this that induced me to advocate the summoning of the restricted Reichsrath,* but my sense of obligation towards the Hungarian Deputies who had undertaken to carry out the arrangement in Hungary.

My view was that as the Hungarian delegates had undertaken the task of carrying out the Agreement—in which they were successful, thanks to the salutary influence of Déak—the Government was bound to do everything to secure its unconditional acceptance. I considered that the best means of doing this was to appeal to the sense of justice of the Reichsrath, relying on the fact that with the Agreement the Constitution would again become operative: a calculation which proved correct.

I only discovered by means of a later correspondence, that at that time a misapprehension existed between me and Count Belcredi. As he understood it, the reservation of an amendment of the Agreement by the Reichsrath was a *sous entendu*, known to the Hungarian Deputies, and accepted by them. But those gentlemen, and Count Andrassy in particular, expressed themselves to me in a contrary sense. It is easy to foresee the not merely probable, but absolutely certain course which affairs would have taken had the former view been correct. Apart from the fact that Déak would scarcely have consented

* *i. e.*, an assembly composed of representatives of all parts of the empire except Hungary.

to carry through so immature and uncertain a proposition, the state of things on this side of the Leitha had to be considered. I have already said that *à priori* only a conditional acceptance was to be expected from the extraordinary Reichsrath. In this case there were two means of escape—either renewed negotiations with Hungary, or the closing of the extraordinary Reichsrath and a general election of new members. (There could be no question of dissolution, as the extraordinary Reichsrath was under the Constitution only a consultative body, without legislative powers). The country was in such an agitated state that an appeal to the electors in favour of an unconditional acceptance of the Hungarian demands would have been useless; while on the other hand, there was no prospect of the Hungarian Parliament proposing an alteration of the original scheme. The closing of the Reichsrath would simply have brought matters back to the position which was ended by my journey to Pesth; rescripts from Vienna, addresses and resolutions from Pesth, and a hopeless deadlock.

My views finally prevailed, and this was the second step by which I advanced the Agreement.

The other Ministers whom I consulted entirely shared my views, and yet two of them, the Ministers of Justice and of Commerce, had taken part in the September manifesto. The Minister of War, Baron John, was my strongest adherent in the Cabinet.

I was so far from desiring the retirement of Count

Belcredi that I took pains to represent to his Majesty the possibility of his retaining office during the convocation of the restricted Reichsrath. But it was necessary to come to a final decision. In a Council of Ministers under the Presidency of the Emperor which lasted four hours, I stood alone (my colleagues maintaining an absolute neutral attitude) in opposing Count Belcredi, who not only had the advantage over me in his accurate knowledge of details, but defended his views in one of the most brilliant speeches I ever heard. When the Emperor dismissed us without expressing his opinion, I withdrew with the impression that I was defeated. I retired to my room in the Ministerial residence, thinking that my term of service in Austria was at an end, as matters had reached such a state of tension that my defeat would have necessitated my resignation. I remained a long time immersed in thought, when a messenger arrived with a note from the Emperor to the following effect: 'Please draw up the circular to the Diets in accordance with your proposals.'

Next day I became President of the Ministry. The task of preparing the circular to the Diets was full of difficulties, as it was not easy to represent the change of policy in such a light as not to impair the Imperial authority. I thought my best course would be to attach to the circular (which was to be issued in the name of the Government) a personal communication to each provincial Governor. The former ended with the declaration that his Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty had given orders that an

extraordinary Reichsrath should not be summoned, but that the 'Constitutional Reichsrath' was to meet at Vienna on the 18th of March, and that those changes in the Constitution which were necessitated by the Agreement with Hungary should be submitted for its acceptance.

At the same time notice was given of bills as to the election of Delegates for the consultative assembly on common affairs; also bills relating to national defence, to the development of the Constitutional powers of the western half of the empire, to the responsibility of Ministers, and to the extension of the Constitutional autonomy of the provinces, for which a desire had repeatedly been expressed in the various Diets.

This return to Constitutional practice in Austria gave me no small amount of labour, anxiety, and struggles, all of which I had to bear alone.

Let it not be supposed that I write these words in a bitter spirit. In writing my reminiscences, I can only narrate what really occurred. Least of all do I wish it to be supposed that I was annoyed by the homage paid to Schmerling on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the February Constitution.* No one can have joined in that homage more heartily than myself. There is no man in Austria whom I valued and esteemed more than Schmerling. Much to my regret, I was never in a position to be able to be of use to him. Politically, I revived and

* In 1886 'The February Constitution' was introduced by Herr von Schmerling on the 27th February, 1861.

consolidated what he had done, though I put his sympathies to a severe test by establishing the Agreement with Hungary. Yet I have always found him the same sincere and cordial friend, and his appreciation has compensated me for many an unjust judgment.

CHAPTER II

1867

FORMATION OF THE MINISTRY.—BARON BECKE, BARON KELLERSPERG, CHEVALIER VON HASNER, COUNT TAAFFE, CHEVALIER VON HYE.—DISSOLUTION OF THE DIETS OF BOHEMIA, MORAVIA, CARINTHIA AND CARNIOLA.—FAVOURABLE ISSUE OF THE NEW ELECTIONS.—SPEECH FROM THE THRONE.—DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.—THE GALICIANS.—MY SPEECHES IN BOTH HOUSES.—THE MINISTRY OF POLICE.

When I considered that Count Belcredi enjoyed the highest favour, esteem and confidence of the Emperor, I could not believe that my arguments had prevailed; I was forced to convince myself that the Emperor found my remaining in office a necessity, for reasons apart from the question under discussion, and rather connected with Foreign than with Internal Affairs. The next day Count Belcredi sent in his resignation, and I was immediately appointed President of the Ministry. I thus became the head of the three Departments—of the Interior, of Public Worship and Instruction, and of Police—

which had been under the direction of Count Belcredi, besides that of Foreign Affairs, the whole weight and responsibility of which fell upon me.

My next task—not a very easy one—was to find Ministers. Those who had hitherto been Count Belcredi's colleagues—von Komers, Minister of Justice, Vice-Admiral Baron Wüllerstorff, of Trade, and Field Marshal Baron John, of War—remained in office. Baron Becke, who had managed the Finance department on the retirement of Count Larisch, became Minister of Finance. Baron Becke did important service during the negotiations with Hungary. He was an admirable man of business, uniting in a remarkable degree the qualities of application, cleverness and perseverance. In both Delegations his intervention succeeded more than once in carrying the War Budget. I always valued him highly, and I do not remember that he ever had cause to complain of me.

There remained the Ministry of the Interior and that of Public Worship and Instruction. The Ministry of Police did not take up much of my time, and it was particularly interesting to me.

Being naturally unacquainted with the personages suited for office, the assistance of Hofrath von Hofmann, afterwards 'Sektionschef,' was most useful to me. He occupied at that time a rather subordinate position in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He had been Secretary to the Upper House, and knew the various members of it thoroughly. He directed my attention to the Governor of Trieste, Baron

Kellersperg. I summoned him to Vienna, and offered him the Ministry of the Interior. He declined, saying that his centralistic views were incompatible with Dualism. I did not doubt the sincerity of this declaration, although I could have retorted that the Hungarian Compromise was a *fait accompli*, and that the Austrian Minister of the Interior could have little opportunity of taking part in its execution. I accordingly did not hesitate to recommend him, some weeks later, to the Emperor as Governor of Bohemia, in which capacity I fully appreciated the abilities he displayed.

I selected Hasner for the Ministry of Instruction. He had been recommended to me by the Liberals, and also by Count Leo Thun, who was at that time still my friend. After several interviews, Hasner accepted office, and the day on which he was to be presented to his Majesty was fixed, when he surprised me with a letter in which he stated that he could not enter the Cabinet owing to the centralistic views he had always entertained. Some months later I renewed the negotiation, and he accepted my offer under the condition that permission should be given for the establishment of a Municipal College at Vienna, as proposed, but hitherto without success, by the Municipal Council of that city. This condition was decisively rejected; but when Hasner took office in the 'Bürgerministerium'* at the end of the year the demand was granted without objection.

The first who showed himself ready to join the

* See page 56.

Ministry was Count Taaffe, the Governor of Linz, to which place Herr von Hofmann proceeded to offer him the portfolio of the Interior. Count Taaffe was still young, and his appointment was a great step of promotion; but I had reason to be grateful to him for taking office, for I not only knew that he possessed considerable knowledge of affairs, and especially of the law, but also that in the aristocratic circles to which he belonged his nomination was regretted because it was feared that he would thereby compromise the future that seemed in store for him.* Count Taaffe became not only a most agreeable and amiable colleague, but also in many respects a very useful and, I must add, devoted assistant. His conduct at the council table was exemplary, and Herbst himself said to me, at a time when Taaffe had already become the object of violent attacks, that the presidency of the Council of Ministers had never been better filled than by Count Taaffe. He had only two drawbacks: he was not only no orator, but was as destitute of the gift of improvised as of studied speech; and he was not happy in his way of making short explanations. Nor was he fortunate in his choice of colleagues. This became evident in his second ephemeral Ministry of 1870, which would have lasted longer if two officials had occupied the seats in the Cabinet which were assigned to two deputies. In both respects Count Taaffe showed considerable improvement during his last and more permanent administration.

With Taaffe's assistance I succeeded in obtaining

* He is now Minister-President at Vienna.

a Minister of Instruction. Herr von Komers, whose position as a Minister who had been in favour of the suspension of the Constitution was scarcely tenable in view of the convocation of the Reichsrath, exchanged the portfolio of Justice for the Presidency of the Chief Court of Justice at Lemberg. Admiral von Wüllerstorff, who was in the same position, resigned the Ministry of Commerce. Becke undertook the latter for the time being, but the Sektionschef, Baron Pretis, became the real Minister of Commerce.

Chevalier von Hye took the Ministry of Justice and the provisional direction of the Ministry of Instruction. He was not liked by the Chamber; but he was a thorough lawyer and a good speaker, and he knew how to make his authority respected.

This subject of the nomination of Ministers has led me far into the summer of 1867, and I must now return to the period when I assumed the Ministry of the Interior.

Naturally I had at that time a multitude of visitors. Chief among them were the leaders of the Liberal, or Constitutional Party; but I was also visited by members of the Federal Party, including Prazak and Rieger, who were, however, not very satisfied at the turn things were taking.

I was urged by the Germans to dissolve the Diets elected under Belcredi's administration which had returned (in Bohemia, Moravia and Carinthia) nationalist majorities. But I firmly refused to do so, having very strong convictions on the subject.

I had also formed very decided views as to the development of the Constitutional system in Austria. The only countries where the Constitutional system has really and uninterruptedly shown itself efficient are England and Belgium. The reason is that in these countries there are two parties which are strictly distinct from each other, equally capable of governing, and always ready to assume office. In Austria, where there is so much strife among the nationalities, such a division of parties is especially necessary; and it seemed to me by no means impossible to bring this about, provided all the nationalities were to send deputies to the Reichsrath. I conceived the possibility of a Liberal and a Conservative Party. In the latter the Slav element would predominate, but would find itself united to a large section of the German landed proprietors; in the Liberal Party the German element would be the most important, but it would not exclude the Slav element. Even at the present day I consider the realisation of that idea not to be unattainable.

In compliance with my wish, the Diets were not disturbed, and were called upon to elect members for the Reichsrath. Had Bohemia and Moravia shown any appreciation of my policy, the opposition would have had ample opportunity to take part in the establishment of the December Constitution. Perhaps there was no want of appreciation, but only of good will. Aversion to the foreign intruder prevented all calm reflection. In Bohemia Count Henry Clam and Prince George Lobkowitz predicted that my

Administration would not last six weeks. The Diets of Bohemia and Moravia took part in the elections, but with such reservations as the Government could not accept. A Deputation was sent to Vienna to explain the objections of the Bohemian Diet, and Count Frederick Thun informed me that it was coming. He received a telegram in reply that the Diet was dissolved. The same course was taken as to the Diets of Moravia and Carniola. I have been frequently reproached with not having taken similar measures with regard to the Tyrol; but the reason why the Tyrolese Diet was not dissolved was that I was certain nothing would be gained by its being re-elected. As to the Galician Diet, I informed it through Count Goluchowski that any refusal to elect, or election with reservations, would result in an immediate dissolution, but that if the Diet sent Deputies to the Reichsrath, I would show myself ready to listen to any reasonable wishes they might express.

After the dissolution of the Bohemian Diet, every possible pressure was brought to bear on the new elections, as the question involved was the authority of the Government and the success of the course it was pursuing. Prince Charles Auersperg was most active and successful in this respect. The Emperor materially assisted me by giving the Bohemian nobility to understand that he desired the elections to result in the triumph of the Government. Nor did Archduke Charles Louis conceal the Emperor's views on this subject during a short stay at Prague. There is nothing more Constitutional than that the

sovereign should support the Government he himself has chosen; only the Feudal Party objected to his doing so. The result of the elections showed a large majority in favour of the Constitution.

In the course of these elections I gained a seat, having been chosen by the Chamber of Commerce of Reichenberg; and in connection with this incident a characteristic episode occurred. Count Hartig (who had generously forgotten that I was in former days opposed to his being appointed envoy at Dresden because I wished that post to be assigned to an abler man, Baron Werner) had proposed me as a candidate at Nimes. This candidature had to be given up because no less a person than Dr Herbst wrote a letter against it, thus objecting to the very man who had extracted his party from the most trying difficulties, although I am ready to believe that he did so for reasons satisfactory to his conscience. The Chamber of Commerce of Reichenberg then offered me a seat. I accepted it with gratitude, and the Diet elected me to the Reichsrath, which I thus had the privilege of entering as a Deputy.

The day of the opening arrived. According to the regulations then in force, the Emperor had to nominate the Presidents of both Houses. Prince Charles Auersperg was President of the Upper House, and for the House of Deputies I suggested the Burgomaster of Brünn, Dr Giskra. My first acquaintance with Dr Giskra, who afterwards became a great friend of mine, and who remained faithful to me, which was not the case with many who owed

me more, dated from the night of Königgrätz. He appeared at the railway station when King John arrived, but he obviously did this more for the purpose of speaking to me than of receiving the King, for he had his great-coat on and wore a small hat. After Belcredi's resignation he repeatedly came to Vienna, and I had occasion to become intimate with him, and to recognize his great ability, sagacity, and firmness. An excellent impression was produced by his nomination to the Presidency.

I myself composed the speech from the throne, weighing every word. It was my duty to do so, and the criticism of the newspapers, which said that it was too cold, was unjust; the concluding sentences produced a great impression. The solemnity of the opening in the great Rittersaal had a sublime effect; the cries of 'Bravo!' however, to which I was unaccustomed and which I considered highly indecorous, did not please me in spite of the satisfaction they expressed. In England, where, indeed, the House of Commons is on such occasions only represented by some of its members, who listen to the delivery of the Queen's Speech in the House of Lords, such exclamations would be considered scandalous.

The task of representing the Government in the debate on the Address and the numerous sittings in Committee, fell exclusively upon me, and I had to perform it unassisted. I succeeded in limiting the excessive demands of the German Liberals, and it was perhaps not an unfortunate idea, though certainly a

sincere one, when, in closing the debate on the Address in the House of Deputies, I resumed it in three words: 'forward, not backward,' words which were not repudiated by the Government. That the Address would be passed there was no doubt; but it was desirable that the minority should not be too large. In this respect, the attitude of the Galicians was alarming, and they threatened at last to force a division. I succeeded in postponing the division to an evening sitting, which began in the absence of the Poles. Meanwhile I negotiated through Count Goluchowski with the Deputies Count Adam Potocki, Ziemialkowski, and Zyblikiewicz, and at half-past eleven I appeared in the Reichsrath accompanied by the thirty Polish Deputies, who resumed their seats. The Address was voted almost unanimously. It was a most dramatic scene. From Buda I received a telegram from Staatsrath Braun saying that his Majesty congratulated me on my speech.

Not with alarm, but with less certainty of success, did I enter on the debate on the Address in the Upper House. The difference between the two Houses consisted in this, that there was no personal opposition in the House of Deputies, while Centralism and aversion to Dualism were far more strongly expressed in the Upper House.

My speech, however, was well received, and Prince Auersperg sent the secretary of the House, Hofrath von Hofmann, to the Ministerial bench to congratulate me.

CHAPTER III

1867

THE SECRET TREATIES BETWEEN PRUSSIA AND THE SOUTH-GERMAN STATES.—COUNT TAUFFKIRCHEN'S MISSION.—DR BUSCH AND 'OUR CHANCELLOR' AGAIN.—AN UNKNOWN DESPATCH.—THE LUXEMBURG CONFLICT.—THE SULTAN IN VIENNA.—MY HIGH RANK.—DEATH OF THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN.

During this time, when the entire weight of the reconstruction of internal affairs lay upon my shoulders, I was by no means condemned to inactivity in matters of foreign policy; on the contrary, I was very unexpectedly called upon to intervene in them. The Luxemburg complication was just then disturbing Europe, and at the same time various incidents occurred in connection with it: negotiations between Paris and Vienna, Count Tauffkirchen's Mission, and the publication of the secret Treaties of 1866 between Prussia and the South-German States.

If my conduct, though not interpreted as it

should have been, was ever calculated to refute the accusation that I pursued on principle a policy hostile to Prussia or to Germany, it was at that moment.

Government circles in Vienna had some suspicion, but no certainty, as to the South-German Military Treaties, and to the general public they came as a complete surprise. To call things by their true names, these treaties were a masterpiece of treachery. It has frequently happened in history that treaties were not kept; but that a treaty should be broken in anticipation, was a novelty reserved for the genius of Prince Bismarck. To sign treaties with the South-German States, reducing them to a permanent condition of dependence on Prussia, and then to conclude a few days later a treaty with Austria, stipulating for those States an independent international existence—this was indeed the *ne plus ultra* of Macchiavellism.

My despatch to Count Wimpffen, the Austrian Ambassador at Berlin, on this subject was printed in the first Red Book of 1868. The Vienna newspapers praised it without a dissentient voice, and I remember that a very favourable opinion was pronounced on it by Count Andrassy in the course of conversation.

It might justly be maintained that Tauffkirchen's offer was merely a joke. A guarantee of the German Provinces of Austria! But who wished to attack them? Neither France, nor Germany, nor Italy. The guarantee of the German Provinces by Germany had a strong family likeness to the guarantee given by the Italian bandit to the traveller who comes to

terms with him. I am willing to believe that Berlin thought as little of this aspect of the case when Count Tauffkirchen was sent on his mission, as it did of despoiling Austria. But that does not diminish the singularity of the offer or the policy of its rejection.

But Prussian logic perceives in the expression that 'Austria had no interest in making an enemy of France,' a 'semi-transparent menace,' in which opinion it is strengthened by the simultaneous 'search for an opportunity of revenge in union with another power.' In what did this action consist? In a proposal of a revision of the Treaty of Paris, a Treaty which concerned Germany but little, if at all. Why revenge? Because Russia was to be induced to pay a debt of gratitude for the revocation of the Article relative to the navigation of the Black Sea—which I had recommended with the object of inducing Russia to unite with the other Powers in Eastern questions—and because such payment could only consist in measures directed against Germany! The negotiations with Russia, as well as those with France and Italy, were 'intrigues.' When Prussia, in the days of the Confederation, formed an offensive and defensive Alliance with Italy against a member of the Confederation, this was an act of justifiable caution; but when Austria, after having been expelled from the German Confederation, and after having acquired perfect freedom as regards her alliances, negotiated with another Power, that could only be an 'intrigue.' When Prussia made an agreement with Hanover in

1851, to the detriment of those who were united with her in the Zollverein, this was an act of independent policy; but when those affected by it conferred together on the subject, they were accused of making a coalition against Prussia. This confirms what I have said elsewhere: the Prussians have a keen eye for the faults of others, and no perception of their own.

Thus, and not otherwise, arose the notion of the 'anti-German, vindictive, and turbulent policy of Baron Beust.'

Austria took an active, but dispassionate and conciliatory part in the correspondence that took place between the Cabinets before the London Protocol decided the Luxemburg question. I proposed two alternatives: either the solution which was finally accepted, or that Luxemburg, which the King of Holland was willing to relinquish, should be ceded to Belgium, and that in return Belgium should restore to France those small frontier districts and fortresses which had been left to France in 1814, and were incorporated into the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1815. This proposal, which was very favourably received in Berlin—as even my opponent, Dr Busch, admits—aroused most inexplicable and unjust indignation in Belgium. If the King of Italy could sacrifice for the greater security of Italy the cradle of his dynasty, it seems to me that it was not asking too much of the King of the Belgians to exchange some districts which his country had acquired less than half-a-century before, for a territory more than four

times their size. The idea was not unacceptable to Prussia and to Europe, one neutral State being more easily protected than two; and the withdrawal of the Prussian garrison from Luxemburg, with which Bismarck was reproached as if it had been a *reculade*, would have been much easier when there was no further question of its being German territory. It was amusing to hear the French Government state as a reason for its refusal, immediately after concluding a Treaty which enriched him with a Grand-Duchy, that the Emperor did not desire any extension of territory.

Nevertheless our mediation was appreciated in Paris as well as in Berlin. The narrative of the French diplomatist M. de Rothan agrees with the above, and is perfectly just to me.

Soon afterwards two illustrious visitors gave more occupation than ever to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Sultan concluded the European tour he made after the Paris Exhibition with the visit he paid to the Emperor at Schönbrunn. Abdul Aziz could not speak a word of French, so that it was impossible to converse with him on business, but I was able to do so all the more with Fuad Pasha, who was in his suite. I was deeply interested by these interviews with two great Turkish statesmen who will never be replaced —Ali and Fuad. Fuad, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, made me the most amiable advances, and I succeeded in convincing him that my intention in issuing the despatch of the 1st of January 1867 was favourable and not hostile to Turkey. This is proved

by a despatch of Fuad's published in tho Red Book of 1868. He seemed pleased with my conversation, and a bon-mot which I made won his heart and that of the Sultan. I happened to be standing one day at a window in the palace of Schönbrunn. The Sultan entered with Fuad, and spoke to me in Turkish. Fuad translated: 'Le Sultan dit que l' Empereur a daigné lui conférer le grand cordon de St Etienne, mais que, vu sa rotondité, le ruban est insuffisant.' (It is well known that Abdul Aziz was very stout.) 'Cela prouve, Sire,' said I, 'combien les liens sont étroits.' When I visited Constantinople two years later, Fuad was no longer among the living.

Fuad was quartered in the 'Hietzinger Stöckel,' which I subsequently inhabited, and my successor after me; and owing to the distance of this building from the Schönbrunn Palace, his breakfasts were supplied by the restaurateur Dommayer. Prokesch came to me one morning in the wildest excitement, exclaiming: 'Imagine what has happened! They have actually given him ham!' He became still more angry when I retorted: 'Well, he has not found my January despatch, which you condemned, at all indigestible; perhaps it will be the same with the ham.'

The presence of the Sultan gave the Emperor an opportunity of conferring a great distinction upon me. This was a fresh proof of Imperial favour, which I had not solicited, and which excited much secret animosity towards me. There was a State dinner at Schönbrunn, and I, although Chancellor of the empire, was

placed at the end of the table as a junior Councillor, so that those of my official subordinates who were present, Prokesch included, were seated above me. The latter audibly expressed his disapproval of this arrangement. 'This is absurd,' he said; 'such things occur only in the West. In Oriental countries they would be impossible.' After dinner I went to the Court Chamberlain, Prince Hohenlohe, with whom I was intimate, and said: 'I do not make any pretensions or claims, but I must beg that on similar occasions I may not be invited.' On the following day I received a letter in the Emperor's handwriting conferring the same rank upon me as was conferred on old Prince Metternich, namely, the first place after the Court Chamberlain, so that I took precedence even of the Austrian Princes.

The precedence reserved for Prince Hohenlohe caused some embarrassment to the diplomatic Corps, as it is a universal principle that the Minister of Foreign Affairs always takes the first place. Of course it was arranged that we should not be invited at the same time, and on occasions of great ceremony, such as the banquet given by Lord Bloomfield on the Queen's birthday, I voluntarily gave up my place to Prince Hohenlohe. It was a good idea of one of the American Ambassadors to write to me one day, of course with the best intentions: 'Prince Hohenlohe was to have dined with me to-day. He has excused himself: will you not avail yourself of the opportunity?'

I must here introduce a reminiscence of a second

illustrious visitor and of a terrible event which was the chief cause of his visit. It was the only shadow that darkened the year 1867, so full of light and splendour for me.

A few days after I had entered the Austrian service, I received a most courteous letter from the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico.

His Majesty congratulated me on my appointment, expressing great hopes for the future, and conferred upon me his highest Order, that of the Mexican Eagle. The catastrophe was imminent and yet nobody suspected it, although the news of the withdrawal of the French troops and the insanity of the Empress Charlotte sounded like a death-knell. Then came the appalling intelligence of the Emperor's imprisonment. The necessary diplomatic steps were taken without delay. Not only did our Ambassador at Washington seek the intervention of the United States, but Count Apponyi was instructed to demand that of the English Government, and Lord Stanley, now Lord Derby, acceded to his request with the greatest willingness, expressing a firm conviction that the Emperor's life would be spared. I took the liberty of drawing attention to the fact that Mexico would demand a guarantee against the Emperor's return; and that perhaps it would be considered equivalent to a guarantee if the Emperor were restored to his rights as an Agnate of the House of Hapsburg, which he had renounced on accepting the Crown of Mexico. This involved, according to the rules of the Dynasty, the consent of the Family Council, which was immediately summoned

for that purpose by the Emperor of Austria. I remember this episode very vividly, because it gave me a full insight into his Majesty's noble character.

Perhaps the Archduke Maximilian has been judged unfairly, and he may have been accused of many an ambitious scheme which he did not really contemplate. But it is certain that he was surrounded by dangerous advisers (I will only allude to one of them who bore a well-known Belgian name), and that even in the highest circles it was whispered that he aspired to the Crown of Austria. The Emperor Francis Joseph could not fail to notice that when, after the disaster of Königgrätz, Maximilian was one day driving from Schönbrunn to Vienna, he was received with cries of 'Long live Maximilian!' Many an imprudent saying of the Archduke's was reported. I mention all this to show that the Emperor had ample reason for disliking and suspecting his brother. Nobody in those days was more in a position than myself to know that the Emperor had only one thought, how to rescue him; and that after the disaster of Queretaro his grief was profound and sincere. In the Family Council mentioned above, at which I was present, one of the Archdukes gave strong expression to the political apprehensions which might be aroused by the restoration of the Archduke Maximilian to his rights. This sincerity did honour to the speaker's character, but it hurt the brotherly feeling of the Emperor. 'It is a question of saving a life,' his Majesty said, 'and that alone would be sufficient to decide me.'

The Imperial decision was telegraphed in good time to Washington, but fate was not to be baffled. One day I received early in the morning a telegram in English: 'Emperor Maximilian condemned and shot.' The Emperor was at Ratisbon at the time, and I sent a confidential messenger to break the news to him and to the Archduchess Sophia. It was a terrible time. Some years later I had an equally hard task when I myself went to tell Prince Peter Aremberg as considerately as I could, of the murder of his son, a young man full of promise, who was Military Attaché at St Petersburg.

CHAPTER IV

1867

VISIT OF THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF THE FRENCH AT SALZBURG.—WHAT REALLY HAPPENED.—JOURNEY OF THE EMPEROR TO PARIS.—MEETING WITH THE KING OF PRUSSIA AT OOS.—THE EMPEROR IN PARIS.—MY INTERVIEW WITH ARCHBISHOP DARBOY.—BANQUET AT THE HÔTEL DE VILLE.

The tragedy of Queretaro took place during the great Paris Exhibition, which was adorned by the presence of Alexander, Emperor of Russia, and William, King of Prussia, and became a sort of European rendezvous.

It was thought from the first that the Emperor Francis Joseph should also undertake the journey to Paris. After the tragic end of the Emperor Maximilian, objections were raised, and the Emperor found a reason for declining the journey, not so much on account of his grief for his brother's loss as because Napoleon, after persuading him to accept the Mexican Crown, had left him in the lurch by

withdrawing his troops. When the Emperor expressed himself in this sense to me, I remembered his request that I should always tell him the truth. I therefore screwed up my courage to hazard the remark: 'And Hanover?' The Emperor Napoleon could not risk a rupture with the United States; it was equally impossible for the Emperor of Austria, after the disaster of Königgrätz, to take up the cause of the King of Hanover, although the latter lost his throne in consequence of his devotion to Austria. The Emperor had the magnanimity not to be annoyed with me for my sincerity. I was, for my part, very anxious that under such circumstances the Emperor's dignity should be fully preserved, and I declared it to be essential that if his Majesty went to Paris, it should be in return to a visit paid to him. In this sense I wrote to the Ambassador in Paris, and Prince Metternich prevailed upon the Emperor Napoleon to proceed to Salzburg. Thus the Emperor of Austria had the satisfaction of being the only monarch in Europe who did not go to Paris without having previously received a visit from the Emperor Napoleon.

The scene at Salzburg was most picturesque. The architecture of the houses of that town makes the roofs appear flat, thus giving it a Southern look. What Salzburg wants are a blue sky and animated streets. On this occasion it had both, and this gave it an unusual charm.

The day of the meeting was the 18th of August, the Emperor's birthday. A telegram arrived early in

the morning from Berlin, which ended with the words 'give my regards to the Emperor and Empress of the French,' a message which I remembered more than once in later years.

The meeting of the sovereigns was unconstrained, almost hearty. The Emperor and Empress received their guests in the most amiable manner. The Empress Eugénie astonished and delighted everybody by the graceful and yet dignified manner with which she held her receptions; and it was perhaps not without calculation that she arrived in an extremely simple travelling-costume, and that throughout the visit she appeared in very unostentatious toilettes, being obviously desirous of yielding the palm of beauty to the Empress Elizabeth. Napoleon, whom I had seen a year before in utter prostration of mind and body, was active and cheerful, and showed no signs of illness.

There have been few meetings of sovereigns that have been more discussed in the newspapers than the Salzburg interview, and in few cases has reality been so far behind conjecture.

During my stay in England, I had occasion to send to Count Andrassy an official report about past events; and among other things, I wrote as follows: 'Your Excellency may have smiled more than once, when reading in newspaper accounts of the Salzburg interview that it was with the greatest difficulty you prevented me from rushing headlong into the French Alliance. The Emperor Napoleon and I might have been compared to two men on horse-

back who stop before a deep ditch because each of them thinks that his companion wishes him to jump across it.'

Napoleon came unaccompanied by any of his Ministers. The only prominent person in his suite was General Fleury, who was one of his most trusted confidants, although he was never associated with any of the political notabilities of the empire, such as Morny, Rouher, and the rest. All the Austrian Ministers, on the other hand, were present at the meeting. The Emperor had considered it essential that I, who had been so often in communication with Napoleon, should not be absent, and the reason why both the Minister-Presidents were there was that I wished to please Count Andrassy, who was an old friend of the French Court; and after the Emperor had met my wishes in this respect, common courtesy required that Count Taaffe, although at that time he was only the representative of the Minister-President, should also take part in the interview, as it took place in the Western half of the empire.

The only conferences, however, were between the two Emperors, and between the Emperor Napoleon and myself—the French Ambassador, the Duc de Gramont, who naturally had to be at Salzburg for the occasion, sometimes joining us. At the last conference, the Duc de Gramont produced a very elaborate memorandum of many pages, containing some facts and some fancies. I also brought a memorandum, written in large handwriting on three small pages. 'C'est très-bien fait,' said Napoleon to

the Duc de Gramont, 'mais j'aime mieux ce que M. de Beust a écrit.' 'Alors,' said the Duke, pointing to his manuscript, 'il faudra conserver ceci.' 'Non, non,' answered the Emperor, 'il faut le brûler.'

My memorandum, on which the Emperor Napoleon interpolated some remarks of his own, suggested an arrangement as to three points.

We arrived at the conclusion that it was our joint task to observe minutely the stipulations of the Peace of Prague, but to avoid on both sides any interference in German affairs. It was especially agreed that France should refrain from any measure or manifestation of a threatening nature, while Austria should limit herself to preserving the sympathies of South Germany by developing a Liberal and truly Constitutional system.

With regard to some Russian tendencies which were at that time manifesting themselves, it was agreed that if Russia should again cross the Pruth, Austria should occupy Wallachia without delay, and that the acquiescence and support of France should be assured to her.

Finally, as to the Cretan Insurrection it was settled that a less minatory line of conduct should be followed towards the Porte than that hitherto pursued by Russia in union with France, Prussia and Italy. In a despatch which I sent some years later from London to Vienna, I reminded Count Andrassy that I submitted to him at Salzburg my memorandum, which was the only one that was accepted.

This shows that the circular sent by the Marquis

de Moustier to the French embassies after the Salzburg meeting, in which he described it as a personal and friendly interview, did not wander very far from the truth.

The Salzburg interview was followed by the Emperor Francis Joseph's journey to Paris in October. The Empress did not fulfil her intention of accompanying him, as an addition was expected to the Imperial family. The Emperor wished to take the Hungarian Court Minister, Count Festetics, with him as well as myself; but I thought it better that Count Andrassy should accompany him, and I carried my point. The Imperial train was so arranged that Munich was reached in the evening, Stuttgart during the night, and early in the morning Oos, near Baden-Baden, where King William had promised to meet the Emperor. At the subsequent meetings at Salzburg, and particularly after the cordial visits at Gastein and Ischl, I often thought of that first interview after Königgrätz, which did not do much to promote its object. The interview was arranged with the best intentions, but it had not sufficiently been considered that the wound had not yet had time to heal, and that a meeting so painful in many respects should not have taken place in the presence of a third party. The Emperor had not only a numerous suite, but was also accompanied by the Archdukes Charles Louis and Louis Victor. The interview was hurried and constrained. King William remained in the room at the station which had been prepared expressly for the occasion, and the Emperor and the Archdukes

returned to the platform without being escorted to the train. I remember how much unpleasant comment arose from the fact that in passing the open door of that room, I made a profound bow to King William, who was standing immovably on the threshold. Such was the predominant feeling, and it was certainly not the ex-Saxon Minister who embittered it.

At Nancy the first and only stoppage was made for the night. We arrived in the afternoon, and the Emperor had time to visit the graves of his ancestors of Lorraine. Next day we arrived in Paris at noon. During a short period of delay at Meaux we put on our uniforms. At the Strasburg Station in Paris the Emperor Napoleon and Prince Napoleon were on the platform, and we made our solemn entry through the Boulevards, which were entirely closed to carriages, but were densely thronged with spectators. It was like a triumphal procession, and during the whole time of his stay in Paris the Emperor of Austria was the object of the most sympathetic demonstrations, which were no doubt to some extent to be explained by the then popular cry of 'la liberté comme en Autriche.' Both the Emperor and the Archdukes produced a most favourable impression on the Parisian populace, which was enhanced by the fact that they kept aloof from certain disreputable circles that had great fascination for strangers. Their example was not always followed by the other sovereigns.

The Empress Eugénie received the Imperial visitors in the Palace of the Elysée, where apartments were in readiness for the Emperor and his suite. I

inhabited a side-wing with Sektionschef Herr von Hofmann and Hofrath Baron Aldenburg. In later years I often amused Mademoiselle Grévy by showing her how much better I knew the rooms of the Elysée than she did herself.

The Court was not staying at the Tuileries, but at St Cloud, where several state dinners and soirées were given in honour of the Emperor. At one of these fêtes I remember having an interview with Archbishop Darboy, who was afterwards shot as a hostage of the Commune. We spoke of the movement against the Austrian Concordat, and of the measures taken by the Bishops, and I was agreeably surprised at hearing this Prince of the Church, who was afterwards a martyr, express himself against the address of the Bishops, and in a spirit of remarkable fairness and moderation. When on my return to Vienna I told the Papal Nuncio of that interview, Monsignor Falcinelli said: 'Je le crois bien, mais vous ignorez sans doute que Monseigneur Darboy n'est pas une autorité pour le saint Siège.'

Prince Napoleon spoke to me with admiration of the Emperor's answer to the Bishops, but I knew that he at any rate would not be recognised as an authority by the Holy See.

There were no negotiations with the French Government, and there was really no occasion for any. I had several interviews with the Emperor Napoleon, as the French Ministers had with the Emperor Francis Joseph, and I had frequent communications with Moustier, Rouher, and Lavallette. I succeeded

in making the French Government withdraw from a declaration, in which it had at first promised to join, issued by Russia, Prussia, and Italy on the subject of the Cretan Insurrection, and of which we strongly disapproved. On this question the French Government had not fully borne in mind the arrangement made at Salzburg; it issued a circular intended to counteract false impressions, but this only elicited from Count Bismarck the somewhat ironical remark: 'We may now regard the peace of Europe as assured.'

Very brilliant was the banquet at the Hôtel de Ville, especially the Emperor's speech, which was received with enthusiasm, although it did not contain a single word at which Berlin could have taken umbrage. 'Ce n'était pas un toast,' said Count Walewski: 'c'était un acte.'

The Emperor's visit ended with an invitation to Compiègne. I begged to be excused, as I was anxious to go to London for a few days in order to gather opinions on the Cretan question, which I deemed, not unjustly, to be the precursor of future complications.

I met the Emperor at Munich on his return home. Here I first met my future highly-valued Parisian colleague, Prince Hohenlohe, then Minister of Bavaria. During my stay in Paris I had a long interview with the Prussian Ambassador, Count Goltz, and we agreed in thinking that the best means of permanently avoiding a collision with France would be to consolidate South Germany so as to present a united front to the foreigner. I communicated the idea to Prince Hohenlohe, who received it in total

silence; this was doubtless the most prudent, though not the most convincing, answer he could make.

In Munich I found telegrams awaiting me from Count Taaffe and the Burgomaster Zelinka, expressing a hope on the part of the citizens of Vienna that his Majesty would make his entry into the capital in civilian dress.

It was too late that evening to speak to the Emperor, as the hour of departure was fixed for 3 A.M., and I came in at 11 P.M. I did not go to bed at all, so as to be able to speak to his Majesty before his departure. But at 1 o'clock his Majesty had already put on his uniform, and a remonstrance would have been useless. A year later the so-called 'Bürgerball'* took place, and it was hoped that his Majesty would not appear in uniform; his portrait on the programme showed him in civilian dress. I was urged to induce his Majesty to give way, and I attempted to do so by alluding to the loyal feeling with which the Viennese still spoke of the Emperor Francis I and his dress coat. The Emperor, however, answered smilingly, but in a very firm tone, that I need not trouble myself about such matters.

* Citizen's Ball.

CHAPTER V

1867

MY STAY AT PESTH BEFORE THE CORONATION.—ON POPULARITY.—'FIESCO' AT BUDA.—THE HUNGARIAN LADIES.—THE CORONATION.—NOBLE SAYING OF THE EMPEROR.—THE BANQUET IN THE 'REDOUTENSAAL.'—ORIGIN OF THE TITLE OF CHANCELLOR OF THE EMPIRE.—THE CONCORDAT.—THE ADDRESS OF THE TWENTY-FIVE BISHOPS AND ITS REJECTION.—MY LETTER TO CARDINAL RAUSCHER.

It is impossible in writing these Memoirs to adhere strictly to chronology, as this would not allow me to describe events connectedly. Thus I am compelled, after having been led by foreign affairs to the end of the autumn, to return to internal affairs as they appeared in the spring of 1867.

At that time I stayed several times at Pesth, where the Emperor often resided, and where many conferences took place with the Hungarian Ministers on various details of the Agreement. It can never have been justly said of me that I fished for popularity. Though during the first years of my

administration in Saxony I was unpopular, I adhered to my policy, and in Austria I did not hesitate to sacrifice my popularity as soon as duty and conviction required me to do so. During the events of 1869, had I wished to be popular, I could easily have held aloof from internal affairs, which were not under my immediate direction; and yet, with a full knowledge of the consequences, I recommended an agreement with the national elements, which was then only attainable within the narrowest limits. I have always been of opinion, and I have never concealed it from those I served, that one should neither court nor shun popularity. If not purchased at the cost of dignity and conviction, popularity is undoubtedly a support to sovereigns as well as to ministers, and a contempt for such support has often been disastrous. Nothing contributed more to debilitate and finally to dissolve the German Confederation, than the systematic endeavour to eliminate whatever might give its organs the appearance of popularity. This was carried to such lengths that even justice suffered. I distinctly remember the question of the Hanoverian Constitution in 1837 to 1840. Most of the envoys to the Bundestag, and the Governments also, were convinced that the Hanoverian Government was in the wrong; but because its opponents and the Göttingen Professors were popular, justice was not done. Yet how greatly would a vigorous intervention at that time have raised the Confederation in public opinion!

I hope this digression will be excused. It was

suggested by the recollection of my popularity in Hungary, which was not of longer duration than it was in Austria,* only with this difference that I did nothing to forfeit it. My popularity in Hungary was quite spontaneous, and I had in no way reckoned upon it. I am an emotional man, very appreciative of good-will, and my relations with the Hungarians seemed to me to have a sort of poetic association. I lived sometimes in the 'Stöckel,' opposite the Imperial Palace at Buda, at others in the so-called 'Zeughaus,' which was contiguous to it, and, commanded a view of Pesth. It happened more than once, when I was standing on the balcony at night and looking at the sparkling lights of Pesth on the other side of the river, that I recalled to mind the words of Fiesco when he looked out upon the mistress of the seas: 'Genoa, mayst thou be free, and I thy happiest citizen!' Four years later, I remembered this reverie. I had played my part to the end. I also had been dragged by my mantle into the water, like the hero of Schiller's tragedy.

But in spite of all changes of affairs I shall always look back with pleasure on those happy days in Hungary. The ladies of the higher society of Pesth contributed to make my stay most agreeable. There

* In London a young Hungarian pianiste once came to me with her mother. The latter said to me: 'How attached the Hungarians are to your Excellency!' 'Pray don't talk of that,' said I. 'But,' she retorted, 'we Hungarians have a proverb that the ox forgets that he has been a calf.' Even in my secret thoughts I had never complained in such drastic terms of Hungarian ingratitude, and I have always lent a ready ear to those who assure me that I am faithfully remembered in Hungary; although I once had the mortification of hearing that the proposal, made without my knowledge, that the Hungarian nationalisation should be conferred upon me, induced one of the Ministers to exclaim that 'the idea was monstrous.'

is in the women as well as in the men of Hungary much cosmopolitan feeling, in spite of their intense attachment to their native soil; and as a rule they are handsome and graceful. The saying attributed to them: 'Il faut nous mettre toutes à ses pieds,' was of course an invention. I had no concessions to the fair sex on my conscience, for the Agreement had already been concluded when I entered the society of Pesth: and the friendly reception I experienced was quite disinterested.

I shall never forget the day of the Coronation. After the ceremony had been performed in the Cathedral of Buda, the procession moved on to Pesth, where the oath and the other formalities took place. I rode about twenty paces in front of the Emperor in my capacity of Doyen of the Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Stephen, which I had received in 1852, long before my entrance into the Austrian service. When we had crossed the bridge and reached the opposite bank, the multitude suddenly recognised me and cried out 'Eljen Beust' so vociferously, that my handsome and spirited horse reared as we entered the square. At the place where the oath was administered a salute was fired, and I had a great deal of trouble with my horse, but I did not share the fate of two Bishops who found themselves unwillingly compelled to dismount. On the side of the square the Upper and Lower Chamber sat in reserved seats, and when Déak gave the signal, they exclaimed: 'Eljen Beust!' The same cry was repeated several times on our return.

I can assert with truth that these clamorous demonstrations were not quite agreeable to me for the Emperor's sake. How great therefore was my surprise, and how I learned to value more than ever the generosity of the Emperor, when I was summoned to his Majesty's presence immediately after the return to the Palace, and he addressed me thus: 'No Austrian Minister has ever been received in Hungary as you have been; I am heartily delighted at it!'

Reminiscences of a more amusing kind are attached to the grand banquet in the 'Redoutensaal.' As I was alighting from my carriage, an old man of eighty, with white hair and beard, knelt down before me, kissing my hand and exclaiming repeatedly: 'My father! my father!' The staircase was lined on both sides with ladies in the most elegant toilettes. After tearing myself away from my enthusiastic admirer, I could not help saying to a lady standing near me: 'Is this the way you treat visitors in Hungary? Here is an octogenarian who claims me as his father!'

At the banquet I was seated between the Prince-Primate and Archbishop, afterwards Cardinal Haynald. The Hungarians are most accomplished speakers. Although ignorant of the language, I often perceived in the Hungarian Parliament how the speakers never were at a loss for the right word, and never hesitated or corrected themselves. On the other hand, they indulge in the wildest gesticulations. A Hungarian, dressed in the national costume, who was seated opposite to me, rose and made a speech, during which he constantly looked at me, shaking his

fist and rapping the table. I said, half-joking, to the Prince-Primate: 'What have I done to that gentleman that he abuses me so?' 'He?' was the answer; 'why, he is proposing your health, and has just compared you to the morning star!'

Before we left Pesth I had a long interview with the Emperor for the purpose of proposing the nomination of Count Taaffe as representative of the Minister President. In consequence of that interview, the Emperor conferred upon me the title of Chancellor of the Empire. It fully agreed with the position circumstances had made for me, and I yielded to the deceptive hope that the appearance would, at least to some extent, be joined to the reality, and that the Chancellor of the Empire would be raised far above both portions of the empire. This view was erroneous. In Hungary the title was not liked; in Austria the German Liberal Party received it with pleasure, because they saw that it strengthened my personal position, on which everything seemed then to depend. But after the nomination of the Hungarian Ministry, suspicion was thrown on the word 'Chancellor,' and it was greatly misinterpreted. In subsequent chapters I shall refer to this question, and I will only quote what I said on this subject in the Lower House early in 1870: 'The Constitution does not recognise a Chancellor of the Empire, but public opinion has defined his position as follows: The Chancellor of the Empire must not trouble himself about internal affairs, but is responsible for everything that is done by the internal administration.'

After my return from Pesth to Vienna, more burning questions were discussed in the Reichsrath: the chief of these was the appointment of a Parliamentary Ministry with equal powers to that of Hungary. During the session of the Diet at Prague I had an interview on this subject with Herbst, who thought the idea premature, and at Buda I submitted to the Emperor a paper written by him in support of his views. The question was, however, raised in the Reichsrath, and a declaration from the Government on the subject was received with approval by the House.

The question of the Concordat brought threatening clouds into an otherwise clear sky. It had been alluded to in the debate on the address, and specific interpellations were now made on the subject. The Council of Ministers, presided over by the Emperor, decided on issuing a declaration expressing a readiness to negotiate with Rome. The Minister Hye had to present this declaration in the House. Before the sitting he said to me very hopefully: 'Everything is going on favourably. Pratobevera is the first speaker, and you know that he is an Ultramontane.' Pratobevera was indeed the first speaker, and the first words he uttered were: 'The Concordat, that plague-spot on the body of the Austrian nation . . .'

The reception of the declaration was decidedly unfavourable. Nevertheless an attempt was made to negotiate with Rome. I proposed to the Emperor to summon Baron Hübner, who was then Ambassador in Rome. The Emperor consented, adding very

graciously that the Ambassador's stay would be as short as possible.

Meanwhile the movement was assuming larger dimensions, and the opposition issued the celebrated Address of the twenty-five Bishops to the Emperor.

The decided tone of this Episcopal Address made it impossible for the Emperor and the Government to leave it unnoticed. The Minister Hye drew up an answer which was characteristic of the profound learning and carefulness of that eminent lawyer, but was too long, and therefore not sufficiently telling. At that time the Council of Ministers met at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I asked permission to withdraw to my room, and in a quarter-of-an-hour I returned with a draft that was unanimously approved by the Cabinet.*

The Emperor's sanction to this draft was obtained with more celerity and ease than I had expected. His Majesty was residing at Schönbrunn, and I was busy next day in the Reichsrath till 2 P.M., at which hour the Emperor was in the habit of leaving the Burg in Vienna to return to Schönbrunn. On my arrival at the Burg, the Emperor was getting into his carriage; but he stopped the moment he saw me, alighted, and went up the stairs with me, unlocking the door of his Cabinet himself. I submitted my draft to his Majesty and explained my views. The Emperor had no material objections to make, and when I pointed out that the intention of the Imperial

* See Appendix (A.)

answer would not be fulfilled unless it were published in the *Wiener Zeitung*, he consented to that also. Accident had perhaps a great deal to do with the matter, and I will leave the question unanswered whether his Majesty's decision would have been given so promptly if the interview had taken place a few hours earlier.

Even before the Episcopal Address was made known, I received a furious letter from Cardinal Rauscher, complaining of the attitude of the authorities with regard to the agitation on the subject of the Concordat. My reply was written at my dictation by the Sektionsrath, Baron Werner, who died shortly afterwards. His handwriting proves that the document was not, as has been alleged, written in later years.

If at that time everything seemed to proceed smoothly, this was more appearance than reality, and the calm surface concealed many an under-current. In the speech that I made in January 1870 in my own defence, I could justly say that the rocks obstructing our path were not less heavy because they were removed with a light hand.

I have a very vivid recollection of those September days when the Emperor was at Ischl. I knew that several personages, hostile to me and to my régime, had proceeded thither. No message was sent to me from the Emperor, which was a very unusual occurrence; and a letter which I addressed to him remained unanswered. My friends urged me either to go to Ischl myself or to send someone there in

whom I had confidence, to ascertain what was going on. I firmly declined to take either step. When the Emperor returned he greeted me with the words: 'You have suffered, but all is right now.'

CHAPTER VI

1867

THE HUNGARIAN AGREEMENT AGAIN IN THE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES.—SANCTION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL LAWS OF THE STATE.—DIFFICULTY IN FORMING THE 'BÜRGERMINISTERIUM.'—FREEDOM OF THE CITY OF VIENNA AND OF OTHER TOWNS.—AUTOGRAPH LETTER FROM THE EMPEROR.

THE last months of the year 1867 did not give me any more leisure than before for repose and recreation. In the Reichsrath I had to weather the last storm against the Hungarian Agreement, during which I had especially to beat off a violent attack from Herbst.

My speech made some impression, and was highly approved by the Emperor. This new proof of confidence was all the more valuable to me as in those days I had the not very easy task of defending the Crown against the Reichsrath as well as the Reichsrath against the Crown. The Fundamental Laws of the State had reached the stage when they were ready for the Imperial sanction. It would have been

necessary to indulge in strange illusions or to forget entirely what principles and views had long been dominant, in order to suppose that the sanction of these laws would not be a hard trial to the Emperor. His Majesty frequently discussed them with me; and I was able conscientiously to express the opinion that in spite of some stipulations that might give rise to objections, the Imperial sanction was not only required in the interest of the State, but did not involve any danger, several of the laws in question, such as the one guaranteeing Church Property, having been drawn up in a Conservative spirit. More than one Deputy—Giskra in particular—was surprised at learning that the Imperial sanction had been given; and I may truly say that not only is my name signed to the Constitution, but that without my instrumentality it would never have seen the light.

It would be neither patriotic nor of advantage to the Constitution and the political parties that supported it, to say that it was forced upon the Government. The Emperor was a perfectly free agent. Order prevailed at home, and no complication was threatened abroad. To request the Reichsrath to deliberate further on the subject was not advisable, but would have been quite possible and even safe.

I was able to gather from a letter written by his Majesty at Ischl in September with how little favour he at first regarded the proposed laws, and it may easily be seen from the articles of the *Neue Freie Presse* of that time, how the Constitutional Party expected everything from my intervention.

This is of the more weight as the *Neue Freie Presse* was at once the leader and the mouthpiece of public opinion.

Not less laborious was the final task of that year 1867—the formation of the first Parliamentary Ministry. Those who were not witnesses of what passed will scarcely believe that it required a prodigious amount of patience and perseverance to arrange the entrance into the Cabinet of men whose appointment required the exercise of some self-denial on the part of the Emperor, but who had no very arduous duties in prospect, considering that a majority was secured to them. I did not shirk the necessary difficulties and exertions, but the pains of childbirth were very severe. When Prince Charles Auersperg introduced his colleagues to me after they had taken the oath with the words: 'Excellency, you are the father, we are your children!' I answered: 'No, I am the mother; or rather, let us be brothers!'

The only man who came to my relief on this occasion was Giskra. Herbst caused me the greatest difficulties, and it would have been better for the Ministry and the Constitutional Party if he had not entered the Cabinet. When I was at Prague in April during the sittings of the Bohemian Diet, I offered Herbst a seat in the Cabinet. He declined, alleging that the moment for the construction of a Parliamentary Ministry, that is, a Ministry of which all the members should have seats in Parliament, would only arrive when the Agreement should be finally settled, and he developed this view later on in

a detailed memorandum. When the moment fixed by him arrived, he was the first person I thought of, owing to the eminent position he occupied in the House. I first of all offered him the Ministry of Finance, to which he was originally inclined, but the acceptance of which by him would have had its drawbacks, as he pretty openly confessed himself in favour of suspending the payment of interest on the debt. I then proposed that he should be Minister of Justice, and finally Minister without a portfolio. He declined all my proposals, and I thought enough had been done so far as he was concerned. He had nothing to complain of, and it would have been much more advantageous for the Ministry had he persisted in his refusal, as on the one hand even his best friends and adherents admitted that he was rather a decomposing than a cementing element, and on the other the Ministry, which had sufficient capacity and authority without him, wanted the true Parliamentary atmosphere, which is only to be found when there is a brilliant Opposition. The latter would not have been wanting had Herbst stood at its head; and this Opposition of the Left, which would sometimes have agreed with the Right (for Herbst himself offered to join Greuter in the Delegations of Pesth in 1870) would have kept the Ministry together.

The fact was that everybody was afraid of Herbst and was desirous of having him in the Ministry at any price. He accepted after long hesitation. But one circumstance I never forgot. When Herbst paid me a visit, and I expressed my satisfaction at his acceptance, he said: 'I am only afraid that his

Majesty has not seen the programme the acceptance of which I have made a condition of my taking office.' I was neither acquainted with this programme, nor was I entrusted with the duty of submitting it to the Emperor. But his remark enlightened me as to many subsequent misunderstandings.

The Ministry made an imposing appearance. It was headed by Prince Auersperg, whose name was not only aristocratic but popular; and it contained two members of the old nobility, Counts Taaffe and Potocki, besides five Bourgeois Ministers, Herbst, Giskra, Brestl, Berger, and Hasner—who were the leaders of Liberalism—and Plener, who was an admirable Minister of Finance. Considering the numerous and, as a rule, undeserved attacks to which Count Taaffe was exposed later on, I feel it necessary to state that his unselfishness was to be seen in the fact that he most willingly gave up the important Ministry of the Interior, and took in exchange the far inferior Ministry of National Defence. The entrance of Potocki into the Cabinet was a great acquisition. He performed valuable services in his Department, and with Taaffe he formed the element that by degrees reconciled the Emperor to the Ministry. It was a great error, though not an unpardonable one, of the so-called Bourgeois Ministers to suspect these two colleagues. They were both sincerely desirous to maintain the permanence and security of the Ministry, and it should not be forgotten what hard struggles this must have caused, and really did cause, to Count Potocki when the question of

ecclesiastical legislation was raised. And it was never known to Count Taaffe's colleagues how often he succeeded in smoothing over unnecessary roughnesses of language in his reports to the Emperor of the debates.

I will add a few more words as to the formation of the Ministry. I always made it a principle not to importune the Emperor at the last moment with demands unless circumstances made it absolutely necessary. I did not therefore wait until the end of 1867 to bring forward the question of the appointment of the first Cis-Leithan* Ministry in connection with my retirement from the direction of internal affairs. I did this on the 31st of August; and next to the name of Prince Charles Auersperg as Minister President,. the names of Herbst, Giskra and Berger appeared as candidates on the paper which I submitted to the Emperor. The following extract from this document may not be without interest for my readers :—

'Your Majesty may notice that it is not proposed to appoint to the Ministry a candidate of another Slav nationality besides the Polish. It would have been my warmest desire to recommend such an appointment, if I had seen any possibility of it. I have frequently stated to your Majesty that I considered a Coalition Ministry the best solution of the problem. One condition, which does not at present exist, is requisite to carry it out successfully and use-

* The Ministry of the non-Hungarian provinces. The boundary between these provinces and Hungary is the river Leitha.

fully. The candidates who may be summoned from the ranks of the so-called national opposition, would not only have to stand on the ground of the Constitution, but also to be able to lead a party sincerely attached to that Constitution. So long as this is not the case, even the appointment of a capable Minister from this party would only cause confusion and dissension. Indeed, such a man could only be found by selecting him from men of extreme views, whose agreement with men who think differently would be impossible. I do not think that I say too much when I express the conviction that if by a calm and consequent policy the hopes of a federalist organisation of the empire are discouraged, and the recusants agree to enter the Reichsrath, this modification in the constitution of the Reichsrath will be followed by a similar one in that of the Ministry. A Coalition Ministry will then be a guarantee of equality and of peace, while at present it could only be the starting-point for new contests and fresh anxieties.'

I think the above extract will show, first, that I always understood the necessity of introducing the Slav element; and secondly, that I certainly contemplated other measures for the realisation of this idea than those connected with the issue of the Fundamental Laws and the era of reconciliation.

The year ended with almost overwhelming manifestations of confidence, honour, and sympathy. I was presented with the freedom of numerous cities

and towns, and above all with that of the city of Vienna.*

All the Vienna papers, with the exception of the *Vaterland*, joined in this demonstration. It was above all the *Neue Freie Presse* which recorded my services in an enthusiastic article apropos of the letter written to me by the Emperor on the occasion. I give an abstract of it, for reasons to be explained hereafter :

'As will be seen, the Emperor's letter almost overflows with thanks to his Prime Minister. This ovation places Baron Beust on so high a pedestal, that many of his predecessors might contemplate it with envy; and the independent organs of public opinion join in the recognition of the services rendered by the Chancellor in the question of the Constitution.

'To carry out the negotiations which have now closed so successfully and honourably, as this statesman has done, requires indeed—as one who knows him intimately observed—the industry of the bee and the patience of the beaver. It required not only all his diplomatic and undying skill, his zeal for the cause, and his qualities of temperament, but also that singular honesty of purpose which has gained for Baron Beust universal confidence.'

Thus spoke the *Neue Freie Presse* in 1867. In

* About seventy cities conferred their freedom upon me, some in 1867, others in 1871; including the villages, I received about 140. The Vienna diploma is a masterpiece of art, which has often been admired in London and Paris. I was asked to lend it to the Exhibition of 1873, which I declined for the very good reason that I would probably not have received a second unaltered edition had any accident happened to it.

the present year 1886, an important article appeared in that paper on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the February Constitution,* and it gave the names of the various Minister-Presidents after Schmerling. After Belcredi is placed the 'Bürgerministerium;' after Hohenwart, Auersperg; but the name of Beust is conspicuous by its absence. The proprietors and editors of the *Neue Freie Presse* are no longer the same—two of the most eminent are dead; but the paper still represents the same party and still maintains the same principles and opinions; and I have no reason to suppose that it bears me personal animosity. It is this very circumstance that makes the omission all the more remarkable. I must not forget that much earlier—in 1871—the change took place in the attitude of this paper towards me, not after years, but after days. But the greatest satisfaction I then received, was the following testimonial, which has undergone no change:—

'Vienna, *December* 24, 1867.

'Dear Baron Beust,—The sanctioning, on the 21st of this month, of the constitutional laws, and the completion of the compromise with the territories of my kingdom of Hungary, have now brought about, as I had already anticipated in my autograph letter of the 23rd of June last, the moment when your functions as Minister-President for the kingdoms and territories represented in the Reichsrath must constitutionally cease.

* The Constitution introduced by Herr von Schmerling on the 27th February 1861.

'In relieving you, consequently, from the further discharge of the functions of Minister-President, I can only share to the full in the satisfaction with which you must look back on a period in which you have succeeded, by your devoted activity, in solving a question whose difficulties I can fully appreciate.

'I readily express to you my recognition of your successful efforts, and hail the result with the more satisfaction as it has now become possible for you to devote the whole of your energies to the important affairs which still remain under your direction.

'You will therefore make the necessary preparations in order that, in accordance with sec. 5 of the law dated the 21st of December 1867, relative to the affairs which are common to all the territories of the Austrian monarchy, and the mode of conducting them, and on the basis of the article in the Hungarian laws on this subject, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, of War, and of Finance, may enter constitutionally on their duties.

'At the same time I appoint Baron Becke, hitherto Director of the Ministry of Finance, my State-Minister of Finance; and you, with my deputy Field Marshal Baron von John, will continue, as Ministers of State, at the Ministerial posts which have hitherto been entrusted to you.

(Signed) 'Francis Joseph.'

The year began in such a manner that I almost

felt certain I should not stay much longer in the 'Ballplatz;' when it ended, things looked as if I would end my days in the 'Ballplatz.'

How deceptive are the signs of the times!

CHAPTER VII

1868

THE FIRST DELEGATION.—THE RED BOOK.—THE HANOVERIAN PRESS.—MY COLLEAGUES IN THE WAR AND FINANCE DEPARTMENTS.—BARON ORCZY.

The beginning of the year 1868 was signalised by the first meeting of the Delegations, which his Majesty had ordered should take place at Vienna, not at Pesth. The second meeting was in the latter city; and although the Constitution does not contain a provision to that effect, it has become the custom for the Delegations to meet at Vienna and Pesth alternately.

Some disturbing incidents took place at this first meeting of the Delegations; but fortunately they were not attended by serious consequences.

The Austrian delegation met in the 'Statthalterei,' but the room assigned for this purpose proved to be too small, and the result was an unpleasant crush.

I hastened to restore good humour by promising to ask for the room occupied by the Upper House; and here the Delegations met until the palace of the Reichsrath was completed.

More trying was the surprise which attended me in the Hungarian Delegation. The same man who had been hailed less than a twelvemonth before with thousands of 'Eljens,' was now grudged, even before the official sittings had begun, the title of Chancellor of the Empire which had been bestowed upon him by the Emperor and King. Count Andrassy looked upon this as a very serious matter, and advised me to yield, but I declined out of consideration for the Emperor. Meanwhile the dispute was so rapidly assuming the proportions of a conflict, that I thought it necessary to speak to his Majesty on the subject, and to prepare the way for the representations which were expected from the Hungarian Minister-President. Fortunately, as I was leaving his Majesty's room, I met Count Andrassy in the ante-chamber, who told me he had got over the difficulty to the satisfaction of the delegates.

At the first meeting of the Delegation I introduced the custom of issuing reports of diplomatic correspondence, in imitation of the English Blue Books, which had already been imitated by France and Italy. France having chosen yellow, and Italy, green, as the official colour for these books, we had scarcely any other colour left but red. Red was accordingly chosen, and in a shade more inclined to pink than scarlet. 'La diplomatie voit toujours les choses en rose.'

This Austrian Red Book, which Count Andrassy gave up for a time and then revived, has passed through many stages of favour and disfavour. Not only because of its novelty, but also of its contents, the first Red Book was unanimously approved, and the papers were full of its praises. The subsequent publications of this kind were also well received. When Count Andrassy stopped the Red Book, and issued instead of it a Brown Book containing papers on trade questions, there was the usual superficial criticism of what has been given up. What was the Red Book? Nothing but waste paper; Count Beust wished to show how well he could write. Such was the language of almost all the Vienna papers for a time. The fact is that when the 'waste paper' appeared, in the years 1868 to 1871, people scarcely took the trouble to read the Red Books attentively, and still less the Introductions to them, in which there were minute accounts of the course the Government intended to pursue, in Western as well as in Eastern affairs. What took place since was in accordance with these statements, but neither in the Delegations nor in the newspapers was any protest raised against them; the opposition only manifested itself when the Government acted in agreement with the programme it had announced. The whole of Austria's Eastern policy, not only under my administration, but also under that of my successor, was a faithful reflex of the Introduction to the first Red Book.

Prince Bismarck has repeatedly declared himself

a decided opponent of the publication of diplomatic correspondence. He contends that such publications cannot be complete and unreserved, and that therefore they do not attain their professed object of enlightening Parliament as to the foreign policy of the Cabinet, while on the other hand they cause annoyance to foreign Governments. This view, which Count Andrassy embraced for a time, is at first sight very plausible, but it may easily be refuted. The choice of the documents to be published must be made with circumspection, and nothing is easier than to avoid such publications as would cause annoyance. But if it so happens that there already exists a difference with a foreign Government, a consideration for its feelings cannot prevent the representation of things as they are, and as they may develop themselves. It is true that the whole of the correspondence cannot always be made public. But confidential communications between Governments always relate to negotiations which are not confidential, and the publication of the latter enables a Government to gather from the remarks made on such publications in Parliament, useful hints as to matters which form the subject of secret negotiations.

My Red Books afforded more than sufficient material for such a purpose; that they were not sufficiently read and used was not my fault.

The precedent given by the English Blue Books is especially useful for the consideration of this question. They are compiled without much discretion; and are in many cases anything but considerate to

foreign Governments. Yet the latter are as little offended by them as any Member of Parliament is inclined to blame them.

During the first meeting of the Delegations, the somewhat troublesome question arose of the Austrian passports granted to the Hanoverian Legionaries. This was simply an extraordinary blunder on the part of the Director of Police. The most satisfactory explanations were given to the Prussian Government, notwithstanding which Herr von Werther was instructed to send me some very unfriendly despatches. Altogether, the conduct of the Prussian Government with regard to our dealings with the Hanoverians was anything but just. Thus we were assailed on the subject of the Hanoverian pilgrimages to the King and Queen on their silver wedding, to which my answer was that North Germany had made no difficulties in allowing the pilgrims to proceed by special trains. Subsequently Herr von Werther made the somewhat thoughtless remark, when King George honoured some private theatricals at my house with his presence: 'I know that I shall now have to meet the King of Hanover at the palace of the Austrian Ministry.' I could not help replying to this: 'à qui la faute?'

On the whole, the period of the first Delegation was a sort of Parliamentary honeymoon. The debates were conducted very impartially and progressed very satisfactorily, which was due to a considerable extent, so far as the foreign Budget was concerned, to the opportune and valuable report of

Baron Eichhof. In these as well as in subsequent Delegations, I was admirably supported by Baron Becke, Minister of Finance, and by the 'Sektionschef,' Baron Hofmann. The Minister of War had cause to be even more grateful than myself to these two gentlemen for their mediation.

At the beginning of the year 1868 a change of Ministers had taken place in the War Department, Baron Kuhn taking the place of Baron John. One of the many mistakes in the Memoirs of the Chevalier von Mayer is that I drove Baron John out of office. To say nothing of the high esteem I had for Baron John's military talents and services, we were always on the best and most friendly terms, and in political questions he invariably sided with me. His resignation, or rather his return to the post he had formerly occupied—that of head of the General Staff—was brought about by special military considerations, entirely without my knowledge or participation.

I was also on the best of terms with his successor, in spite of the persistent but fruitless endeavours of mischief-makers to sow discord between us. Baron Kuhn was not an orator, but his frankness and the soldierly conciseness of his speeches made him generally liked. He had certain stereotyped expressions, such as 'for example,' 'in a word,' and 'why?' 'The cavalry soldier,' he once said, 'has only one pair of trousers: why? Because the Delegations only grant him one pair.'

Tegetthoff was still less of an orator—his three

words were 'I don't know,' but he has always gained his point, which made Kuhn jealous.

I cannot give a competent opinion as to whether the Army gained under Kuhn's administration or not. He was often reproached with making it democratic, and thereby disorganising it. The new organisation has yet to be tested on a field of battle, but the occupation of Bosnia showed that the Army is well disciplined and efficient.

In the Hungarian Delegation things went smoothly. Count Andrassy gave much help to the Government, although he was not, strictly speaking, entitled to take his seat on the Ministerial bench. For me the most important sitting was then, as afterwards, the sitting in Committee when I was allowed to speak in German. In the first Delegation the want of an interpreter was so strongly felt that Baron Béla Orczy was at once appointed 'Sektionschef' to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He immediately proved himself equal to his unwonted task by study and knowledge of business. The only fault I could find with him was that he spoke and wrote too much. His prolixity did me harm in the Delegation which sat at Pesth in 1870.

Either Lonyay or Orczy translated for me every word that was spoken. Archbishop Haynald, an amiable Prince of the Church for whom I had the highest esteem, attacked me on account of the correspondence with Rome on the subject of the Concordat. I said to Orczy: 'Please say that I want to know whether the Concordat has ever been in force in

Hungary. Whatever he may reply, he will get the worst of it. If he says yes, he will be attacked here; if he says no, he will be attacked in Rome.' Orczy then got up and made a long speech; his words rushed forth in torrents, but he did not seem to produce the slightest effect. When he sat down, I asked: 'Did you not say what I told you?' 'I could not do so quite in the same words,' was his reply. He did better on another occasion during the same session. Pulszky, finding fault with me, though in a very polite and amiable speech, for my supposed mania for scribbling, said that among the fairies which stood round my cradle was the fairy of fine writing. To this Orczy answered in my name that I was very grateful for the compliment, but that Pulszky's speech made the impression upon me that he was more occupied with my coffin than with my cradle.

CHAPTER VIII

1868

INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF THE TITLE OF CHANCELLOR OF THE EMPIRE.—INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS.—THE PROTESTANT.—THE AMBASSADORS IN ROME.—BARON HÜBNER AND COUNT CRIVELLI.—THE RELIGIOUS LAWS IN THE UPPER HOUSE.—THE TWENTY-FIRST OF MARCH.—ON ASSASSINATIONS.

I HAVE stated that I had been completely deceived in my expectations as to the consequences of my position as Chancellor of the Empire.

I will not decide the point as to whether the feeling of distrust at my supposed unjustifiable interference in internal affairs would have been less had I merely been styled Minister; that the title of Chancellor aggravated it is certain. And yet the 'Bürgerministerium' had ample cause to be grateful for my intervention in the year 1868, and it gladly accepted my intervention when it could not do without me. It was entirely and exclusively my doing that

the religious laws were sanctioned and passed through the Upper House, that the reduction of the interest on the National Debt was accepted in Paris and London, and that the Emperor's journey to Gastein did not take place.

I have not said too much in maintaining that the sanction of the Religious Laws, and even their acceptance by the Upper House, was owing to me. Before throwing some light on the facts, I will make a few general observations on the attitude I maintained towards ecclesiastical questions.

My being a Protestant made it extremely difficult to interfere in such a matter, and the success of my interference was especially due to the circumstance that the Emperor repeatedly had occasion to convince himself that so far as my own religious views were concerned, I stood quite aloof from the more momentous questions of the day, and that I always showed myself, not hostile, but invariably respectful, to the Catholic Church. Even externals are of value in such cases. It did not pass without notice, that during High Mass in St. Stephen's Cathedral, when many Catholics around me were only too often engaged in conversation, I alone maintained a devotional silence. I have not forgotten the words the Emperor afterwards said to me on this subject; they are among my most pleasing recollections. It was during the session of the Delegation of 1869. The Committee was proposing to abolish the Embassy to Rome—'to the Prince of Rome,' as a Deputy from Northern Austria put it, and to appoint a Chargé d'Affaires instead. My

opposition to this proposal did not meet with much support; but I succeeded in getting a vote for the Ambassador's salary. On appearing next day before his Majesty, I remarked: 'I must say that I was greatly surprised; there were seventeen Austrians.' 'I know,' replied the Emperor; 'and you were the only Catholic!'

That such was the spirit in which I dealt with this difficult problem, is proved by the following document:

À Son Excellence
Monsieur l'Archevêque d'Athènes
Nonce Apostolique à Vienne.

Gastein, le 24 *Août* 1867.

Monseigneur,—À la veille de mon départ de Gastein il me tarde de m'acquitter d'une dette envers Votre Excellence. Pendant les peu de jours que j'ai passé dernièrement à Vienne, vous avez bien voulu, Monseigneur, m'adresser une aimable lettre, et je vous prie de bien vouloir en agréer mes remercîments, qui pour être tardifs n'en sont pas moins bien sincères et empressés.

Dans cette lettre Votre Excellence veut bien me rappeler que je suis chancelier d'un Empire catholique. J'ai la conscience de ne l'avoir jamais oublié. Quoique protestant, et Votre Excellence m'a rendue Elle-même cette justice, je sais comprendre et apprécier la portée de l'église catholique mieux que beaucoup de catholiques en Autriche. J'ai toujours pensé que l'Église catholique et la Monarchie Autrichienne sont des sœurs qui doivent se secourir mutuellement. Ce

qu'il faut à l'Église c'est la restauration et la puissance de l'Autriche. Depuis que la confiance de l'Empereur m'a placé à la tête des affaires, je travaille sans relâche à faire revivre la Monarchie et à faire marcher le Gouvernement, mais cette tâche, j'ai le regret de le dire, ce n'est pas le clergé catholique qui me la facilite, loin de là, c'est lui qui contribue à la rendre difficile. Ne croyez pas, Monseigneur, que pour cela l'aigreur et le ressentiment entrent dans mon âme.

Tous ceux qui m'ont vu ici, comme en Saxe, à l'œuvre vous diront que jamais peut-être il n'a existé un homme d'état qui ait su appliquer au même dégré à la politique la parole de l'Evangile qu'il doit aimer ses ennemis et tendre la joue gauche à celui qui a frappé la joue droite. Tout ce qui se passe aujourd'hui autour de moi ne changera rien à l'esprit de modération et d'équité qui guide tous mes pas. Mais je tenais à relever dès-à-présent que ce ne sera pas ma faute, si les intérêts catholiques se trouvent compromis en Autriche.

Je ne saurais terminer sans exprimer une fois de plus à Votre Excellence mes profonds remercîments pour la bienveillance personnelle dont Elle m'a honoré jusqu'ici, et que je serai toujours heureux de me voir conservée.

Veuillez agréer Monseigneur, les nouvelles assurances de ma haute et respectueuse considération.

I did not allow the tirades of the Liberal press on the supposed timidity and weakness of the despatches I sent to Rome in any way to influence my policy;

and if I have reason to be proud of anything, it is that the Concordat was abolished without causing a rupture with Rome.

I was determined to put down everything that might have degenerated into persecution. The policy pursued in Austria was very different from that adopted in Germany; and the consequence was that Austria retained, in spite of the change of system, much more of what she had acquired than Germany did. With all deference to the great German Chancellor, I cannot refrain from saying that more courage was required to oppose Rome before 1870 than after that year.

On the other hand, I did not hesitate to speak frankly to the Emperor on the subject. Monsignor Greuter once said in a speech to the peasants of the valley of the Upper Inn, that I threatened the Emperor with a rebellion if the religious laws were not sanctioned. That would indeed have been the very worst means of obtaining the Imperial sanction. Such a threat would have made it quite impossible. My reply was as follows :—

'I am a Protestant, but I would consider it a public scandal if that were to happen which might be expected should the sanction be refused: demonstrative secessions *en masse* to Protestantism in parts of Southern and even of Northern Austria and Salzburg, where the traces of former times have not been quite obliterated.'

It was the great disadvantage of the Concordat, as I said in a letter to Cardinal Rauscher, that it was

identified with Church and Religion as something inviolable, the consequence being that there was no middle term between the extremes of strict orthodoxy and complete indifference.

But I must return to the question of the Concordat.

Already during the debates on the address when the Reichsrath met in 1867, very important ecclesiastical reforms were suggested; but the Government succeeded in directing them into such channels as to avoid complications. Similar attempts, however, were again made; and it soon became apparent that they did not originate with an extreme party, but were the more or less faithful expression of an opinion entertained even in the highest circles. A declaration of policy by the Government was absolutely necessary.

The declaration did not satisfy the House, and yet, under the circumstances, it could not have been other than it was. The Government was sincerely desirous of negotiating with Rome, and I advised the Emperor to summon to Vienna the Ambassador to the Holy See, Baron Hübner.

The stay of Baron Hübner was short, but it was sufficient to show me that, so far as inclination and conviction were concerned, any Roman Prelate would have been equally qualified to carry on the negotiations. I therefore thought it imperative that a change should be made in the Ambassador to the Vatican. A suspicion of this may have prompted the representations made to the Emperor in September at Ischl. It is known that the efforts

then made were without result, and the change in the embassy at Rome was ratified by his Majesty.

As to Baron Hübner's successor, my choice was not happy, but my mistake was pardonable. I had known in former days the Austrian Ambassador in Madrid, Count Crivelli. He performed the functions of Chargé d'Affaires at Dresden in 1852, and I recognised in him an able diplomatist. I thought it a great recommendation that he, an Italian by birth, would be able to carry on negotiations in that language without any fear of mistakes. With the Emperor's consent, I sent for Count Crivelli when I was with his Majesty in Paris, and I discussed with him the whole state of affairs, and the necessity of a fundamental alteration of the Concordat. Count Crivelli acquiesced in everything I said, and I did not hesitate to propose him to his Majesty as Ambassador to the Vatican. Soon afterwards the Count came to Vienna; and there he fell into the hands of an ultramontane circle composed chiefly of ladies. This is the only explanation I can give of his complete change of opinion, which, however, did not manifest itself until he had entered on his new post. It would have been more straightforward had Count Crivelli acquainted me with his change of views before proceeding to Rome; but he may have felt that his religious duty required him to act otherwise. In consequence of the representations made to him by the Viennese ladies to whom I have referred, he came to look upon his mission as ordained by God, and not to be evaded on any account.

The second Red Book contains a portion of his despatches, in which he forgot himself so much that I was compelled, quite against my custom, to point out with some sharpness that I expected from him only faithful reports of what he had done and heard, reserving to myself the right of considering and deciding upon them. Count Crivelli, in other respects a man of clear intelligence, showed in this matter a complete misconception of his instructions. I had cause to complain that on his first audience with the Pope, he did not venture to touch upon the question with which he had to deal. He replied that if, for instance, a Commercial Treaty were being negotiated, the Ambassador could not decently make it a subject of conversation at his first audience. I retorted that such a proceeding would not in itself be offensive, but that the comparison was very inaccurate, as even a well informed sovereign could scarcely be expected to know all about tariffs; while as regards the Concordat, the Holy Father was not only an expert, but a judge. When the Concordat was afterwards discussed between him and the Pope, Pius IX, who was fond of a joke, said: 'Le concordat est comme une robe de femme: on peut l' allonger ou la retrécir, mais on ne peut pas l'enlever.' These words were not unsatisfactory; and had Crivelli shown good will, he might have performed more than he actually did. He should have finished his task early in 1868, before the discussion of the laws in the Upper House. The negotiation was certainly retarded, nay, frustrated, by a memorandum which

the Ministry charged me to send to Rome. It was excessively harsh and abrupt in style, and by no means incontrovertible and sound from the point of view of ecclesiastical law. The Emperor, who I believe submitted this document to competent authorities, was at first strongly against its being communicated to the Vatican, and he only allowed it on the condition that its production should not be ascribed to me.

The time destined for negotiation went by without being used, and the laws, which had been already voted in the House of Deputies, were submitted to the deliberation of the Upper House.

It is well known that this debate became a most violent contest. At that time I myself did not as yet belong to the Upper House, and I appeared in it as a member of the Lower House who was only there as a spectator. I was well informed, however, of what was going on behind the scenes in the Upper House, and I knew that preparations were being made to reject the laws on the understanding that such a step would be supported by the Emperor. As soon as I was certain of the accuracy of this information, I at once spoke to the Emperor on the subject, and pointed out that if the laws were rejected, his Majesty would share the discredit of the failure, while if they passed, a serious crisis would arise, and would become dangerous should its origin be traced to his Majesty's personal intervention. I therefore maintained that it was necessary that the Emperor should do something to contradict the report

that he wished the laws to be rejected; and at my suggestion the Court Chamberlain, Prince Hohenlohe, was asked by the Emperor to appear in the Upper House and give his vote in their favour. The immediate object of keeping the person of the Emperor out of the contest, was thereby attained; but it is also more than probable that Prince Hohenlohe's vote decided many others.*

The day on which the votes were taken after the general debate was too momentous that I should omit to mention some of its most characteristic incidents.

Among many false and exaggerated rumours was the one that I harangued the people on leaving the Upper House, and said that matters were proceeding favourably. There were not many people outside the building, and some who did not know me, asked me how things were progressing: to which I naturally answered: 'Well;' and when I passed on towards the street, I was recognised and cheered.

Towards evening I left my house to smoke a cigar after dinner, as I usually do, though I am not a great smoker. I was accompanied by my brother, and we went along the 'Graben' to the 'Stephansplatz.' Somebody called out my name, whereupon it was taken up by thousands of voices from all sides, from the 'Kärnthnerstrasse,' from the 'Stephansplatz,' and

* Count Leo Thun, who ceased to attend the Upper House after the Agreement with Hungary was completed, nevertheless took part in the division, stating that he did so by command of the Emperor. The fact was that Count Leo Thun asked the Emperor whether he should come or not, and the Emperor said it was the duty of every member to take his place. Count Leo Thun was therefore justified in saying that he appeared by the Emperor's command; but this command certainly did not indicate which way he should vote.

from the adjoining streets, with enthusiastic cheers. I hurried into the 'Trattnerhof,' where I was, without exaggeration, within an inch of being crushed to death by being jammed against the wall. A man embraced my knees, exclaiming again and again: 'You have liberated us from the fetters of the Concordat,' to which I replied: 'Then I beg of you to liberate my legs.' At last I succeeded in reaching the 'Goldschmiedgasse,' where I saw a private carriage, belonging, as I afterwards heard, to Count Larisch. I jumped into it, imploring the coachman to drive away as fast as possible. But the crowd immediately surrounded the carriage, and tried to unharness the horses and draw me along in triumph. With the greatest difficulty I succeeded in preventing them from doing so, but some of my admirers got on the box, and others on the steps. The coachman was obliged to drive on, and the 'Hochs' and 'Eljens' never ceased. It gave me no slight annoyance to find that the carriage was stopped before the palace of the Nuncio and that of the Archbishop of Vienna. At last the procession arrived in the Ballplatz; and as I alighted, the crowd swarmed into the building. I stopped on the lowest step of the staircase, and made a short, but emphatic, speech to those present, in which I thanked them for their sympathies, but said that such demonstrations could only injure the cause which they had at heart. My words were well received, and the crowd withdrew without any disturbance. Count Taaffe now appeared and said: 'I cannot protect you against the love

of the people,' alluding to his functions as Minister of National Defence and Police. I gave orders that the hall door should be locked, and the lights put out. A new crowd had assembled, and I heard from time to time the exclamation: 'He must come out!' but there was no disturbance or disorder.

Some weeks later, I was attacked by a violent fit of vomiting, to which I was never subject before or afterwards, except at sea. I refused to submit myself to a medical examination, as the mere appearance of suspicion might have given rise to conjectures likely to produce disagreeable consequences in the then excited state of the public mind.

Not long afterwards I went with Herr von Hofmann to Gastein, as in the previous year. The latter praised the scenery so much that I was induced to make a tour by way of Kuefstein and Kitzbüchel. It was not until we had arrived at our destination that he told me the true reason of his proposal. He had been informed that there was a conspiracy to assassinate me on my way to Gastein. Curiously enough, the precaution taken by my friend was the cause of another spontaneous ovation. When entering the Tyrol, I was received by the peasants at Wörgl with enthusiastic demonstrations and loud expressions of liberal sentiments. The same occurred in the province of Salzburg. The postmaster at Taxenbach, when I begged him to hasten to get the horses ready, said: 'All right, our hearts are flying towards you.' It was a good thing that in later

years the Gisela line enabled me to do without horses or postillions.

This was not the first time that the word 'assassination' reached my ears. After the May Insurrection at Dresden I was similarly threatened. I never could bring myself to take precautions. Life is not worth living if one is to be in constant fear of death; and indeed I have found that a show of carelessness is no bad means of protection. Threatening letters are oftener practical jokes than anything more serious. I was never able to understand the great fuss made about the threatening letter sent to Bismarck, when I remembered those sent to me. I quote one that reached me in Saxony during the most flourishing period of the Nationalverein: 'Your Excellency would give the German nation a new proof of your patriotism, were you to send in your resignation. But you must do so without delay, you blackguard, or it will be too late.'

It is to the credit of Austria, and of Vienna in particular, that during the whole term of my Austrian Administration I did not receive a single anonymous threatening letter. This was a strange testimonial of popularity, but one not to be despised.

CHAPTER IX

1868

UNFORTUNATE DISAGREEMENTS.

In the summer of 1868, three momentous events occurred: the resignation of Prince Charles Auersperg, the German Rifle Festival, and the projected journey of the Emperor to Galicia.

I may say, with the strictest adherence to truth, that nothing could be more unwelcome or disturbing to me than the resignation of Prince Auersperg, which was all the more unpleasant, as it had the appearance of having been brought about by me. I say 'the appearance,' because in reality nothing was more remote from my thoughts than this sudden resignation of the Minister President; and I subsequently heard from persons who were better acquainted with the Prince than I was, that my visit to Prague was, I will not say the pretext, but the

occasion of his resignation, and this statement is supported by the opening words of the letter in which he requested to be allowed to resign. As I stated in Parliament, I bitterly repented that journey to Prague; but it was not suggested to me by any thought of injuring Prince Auersperg. The Prince had received me sympathetically in Austria; that sympathy I cordially reciprocated, and I owe valuable support to it.*

The Emperor and I often discussed the desirability of persuading the national parties which refused to take part in the Reichsrath to give up their opposition, and the Emperor told me he thought I might be of use in that respect. It was of course not for the Chancellor of the Empire to enter more fully into the subject; but it was evident that as I then possessed the Emperor's full confidence, and was the real creator of the new order of things, I could not be perfectly silent on certain subjects in my interviews with him.

It so happened that just at the time when Prince Auersperg accompanied the Emperor to Bohemia, some despatches which required immediate attention arrived from Baron Meysenbug, who had been sent to Rome on a special mission. I informed the Emperor that I was coming to Prague to communicate these despatches to him, and his Majesty told the

* Nothing could have been more agreeable than our stay at Gastein in 1867. During an excursion in the Anlaufthal I had a dangerous fall, which was happily unattended by serious consequences. On getting off my horse, my foot slipped, and I fell down. 'That was your first false step in Austria,' said Prince Charles Auersperg. Exactly a year later, the Prague incident took place.

governor, Baron Kellersperg, of my approaching arrival, adding that an interview between me and Messrs Rieger and Palacky* would be desirable. Baron Kellersperg very improperly invited these gentlemen to the governor's palace to meet me, only informing Prince Auersperg that he had done so after the interview had taken place.

All I said at the interview was this :

'People represent me as an enemy of the Slavs, and make the utterly unfounded statement that I had said that the Slavs must be pushed to the wall. My point of view was strictly objective, and equally just to all nationalities. But they must not forget that I have signed the Constitution, and cannot therefore depart from it to go to them ; they must enter it to come to me.'

How clearly I spoke in this sense, was proved by the tone of the Czech papers next day ; they all expressed themselves very despondingly as to the interview. Baron Kellersperg, who was present, certainly did not fail to inform Prince Auersperg of the course the interview had taken. It was to the interest of the Prince and of the Ministry, instead of making my meeting with Rieger and Palacky a cause of rupture, to turn it, on the contrary, to their own account, thus strengthening the position of the Ministry as well as that of the Chancellor of the Empire. But the Prince thought otherwise. When I visited him, I found him in a high state of excitement. I expected to hear him complain that I was

* The Czech leaders.

interfering in the affairs of the Cis-Leithan Ministry; but he did not say a word on that point. He merely remarked in a sharp tone that it was intolerable that I should claim the credit of everything that was done; and this looked as if more was to be feared from the success than the failure of my proceedings.

I did all that was in my power to appease the Prince. I left Prague that evening, having only arrived in the morning, and did not stop for the gala performance that was to take place at the theatre. All was in vain. Prince Auersperg even thought proper to leave the Emperor before the end of his Bohemian journey.

Soon after the Emperor's return to Vienna, his Majesty sent me the letter in which Prince Auersperg tendered his resignation, and I think its opening words are important enough to be quoted here: 'I have been struggling for some time with the painful consciousness that I am not honoured by your Majesty with that confidence which would give my services a prospect of success.' *

I asked as a favour that the Emperor should not accept the resignation, and I sent Baron Hoffmann to the Prince's summer residence, Schloss Albrechtsberg, to endeavour to induce him to withdraw it. I met

* Prince Charles Auersperg's opinion as to his prospects of success was not quite mistaken, but I am certain that the Emperor had not the slightest wish for his resignation. The Prince himself, however, was not quite free from blame. During the special debate in the Upper House on the Marriage Law, the Emperor communicated to me two amendments which he would have liked to see accepted. I ventured to state that their acceptance would be difficult. Prince Auersperg was then called, and to my agreeable surprise, he expressed an opposite opinion, and undertook to carry the laws through the House. But no sufficient steps were taken to introduce the amendments; the motion was not even put. Count Salm, who was to bring forward the motion, did not appear at the right time.

the Prince a little time afterwards at Gastein, when I again did everything I could to induce him to retain office. He consented to a postponement of the Imperial decision on his 'irrevocable resignation,' as he called it, but meanwhile he remained perfectly passive. I was told by some persons in the Prince's *entourage* that he was under the influence of mischief makers, who made him believe that there was a prospect of a change of system under the auspices of Count Henry Clam, and that the Prince's pride would not allow him to await such an event, which, I may add, was then quite beyond the range of possibility.

I had the misfortune of very innocently acquiring the reputation of being an opponent of the Auersperg family, whereas, on the contrary, I always did it a service when I could. When the Bohemian Diet met in 1867 with a German-Liberal majority, Count Hartig was appointed 'Oberstlandmarschall.' He assumed that office very unwillingly, and resigned it after the first session. I proposed to the Emperor to appoint Prince Adolphus, brother of Prince Charles Auersperg as his successor. This proposal at first caused some surprise, as Prince Adolphus had hitherto not given any signs of statesmanlike capacity. But I was not far wrong in my choice, independently of my desire to oblige Prince Charles. Prince Adolphus, who had the advantage of a complete knowledge of the Czech language, knew how to make himself respected and liked as President of the Diet.

When in the autumn of 1868 the resignation of Prince Charles became unavoidable, he paid me a

visit, and said: 'I hear that you intend to propose my brother to the Emperor in my place.' I had never even dreamt of such a thing, and I replied: 'I should indeed like to see him in the Ministry; but I consider his presence in Prague essential.' Prince Charles did not agree, and he gave me clearly to understand that he would like to see his brother appointed. In consequence of this interview I sounded the Ministers, and as they all approved the suggestion, I represented to the Emperor that it would be advisable to keep the name of Auersperg in the Cabinet, and thus to reconcile the family.

In a Council of Ministers that took place soon afterwards, the Emperor made a speech to those present, declaring that he would appoint Prince Adolphus Auersperg as Minister-President, to which I confidently expected all would agree. How great, therefore, was my surprise when one of the Ministers said that, until the Reichsrath met, there was no urgent reason for filling up the post of President, as 'we are so contented under the direction of Count Taaffe.'

It will easily be understood that the candidature of Prince Adolphus was dropped after this speech.

After my resignation Prince Adolphus Auersperg was placed at the head of a Ministry which lasted longer than usual; but in 1870 he was again proposed for this appointment without my co-operation, and with as little success. The Ministry happened to be divided, and the Emperor took my advice and sided with the majority. The consequence was that Count

Taaffe resigned the post of Minister-President, whereupon the Ministers belonging to the majority, viz., Herbst, Giskra, Hasner, Plener and Brestl, agreed in proposing Prince Adolphus Auersperg. The latter was summoned to his Majesty, and it appears that this first political interview did not diminish the favour with which the Prince was regarded by the Emperor. Prince Adolphus desired that Plener should be dismissed, and that Giskra should be transferred from the Ministry of the Interior to that of Commerce. It will easily be understood that these kind intentions did not make the Ministers anxious for the Prince's nomination.

Soon after I had occasion to be of use to Prince Adolphus Auersperg, as it was chiefly owing to my mediation that he was appointed 'Landeschef' of Salzburg.

As I said above, if I was not successful with the Auersperg family, I had the consolation of knowing that it was not my fault.

CHAPTER X

1868

THE AUSTRO-ENGLISH TREATY OF COMMERCE.—1865, 1867, 1868, AND 1875. —THE SUPPLEMENTARY CONVENTION.

My advocacy of Free Trade had caused me many trials in Austria, and especially on the occasion of the supplementary convention with England.

I do not wish to blame a highly-estimable predecessor of mine, but it is not to be denied that one of his characteristics, excessive pliancy, manifested itself at inopportune moments. When the Central States were not disposed, at the Nürnberg Conference of October 1863, to displease Prussia by the appointment of a directorate without any prospect of success, the last words I heard were: 'I will show you that I too can come to terms with Prussia.' The results of this view of the situation were the Austro-Prussian Alliance and the joint war against Denmark,

which were totally opposed to the laws of the Confederation, and resulted in the exclusion of Austria from Germany.

Not less mistaken and sensational was the reply given to the Franco-German Customs Treaty, which caused so much displeasure in Vienna, by concluding an English Treaty. Prussia succeeded by its Treaty with France in obtaining the means of breaking the resistance of some States against a Liberal tariff; but Austria, by her Treaty with England, virtually accepted such a tariff. The above policy first manifested itself when the Austrian Government began to open commercial relations with England after 1860. It afterwards entered on a second stage, about which I shall speak further on, and it ended in the supplementary convention—my great sin.

To judge by what has been said from time to time about the English Convention, one might believe that the Austrian wool and cotton industries had been in the highest state of efficiency before the entrance into the country of the 'imported statesman,' as a Moravian Deputy said in the Reichsrath. The first thing the 'foreigner' did was to call in the English, to whom Austria had hitherto given a wide berth, and to conclude a Commercial Treaty with them that was ruinous to Austrian industry. But the real course of events was somewhat different.

Instead of bringing the English to Vienna, I found them there: very extensive concessions had been made to them long before I came. The

chief were the *ad valorem* duties which were afterwards so much abused, and to which England, owing to her large production of cheap goods, attached great importance. These concessions were made before my arrival; and two years elapsed between the signature of the final Protocol of the negotiations of 1867, and the definite conclusion of the Treaty.

I have mentioned above the origin of our commercial *rapprochement* with England; subsequently the matter was also considered from other points of view. An idea was at that time entertained which was not without ingenuity or practicability, but the results of which did not in any way come up to the expectations of its promoters. The object was to attract English capital into Austria, and to open an inexhaustible and reliable source of national credit. And here I must not omit to emphasize the fact that Cobden's doctrines on Free Trade were then very popular at Vienna, where there was every inclination to pursue a Liberal commercial policy. This is clearly proved by the Treaty of 1865.

As I have already stated, this Treaty admitted *ad valorem* duties in principle, and it was arranged that in the ensuing year Commissioners should meet for the purpose of framing regulations on the subject. This was to have been done in March 1866. The arrival, however, of the English Commissioners was delayed, and they came just before the outbreak of the Austro-Prussian war. Under these circumstances the negotiations of course had to be adjourned, and the English Commissioners were invited to return in the

following year. In the meantime I was appointed Minister; and it was not to be expected that I should ask the English Commissioners to stay at home. The negotiations were carried on with the participation of the director of the Ministry of Commerce, Baron Pretis (who afterwards made such an excellent Minister of Finance), and he proceeded with great caution and reserve; but he could not, any more than myself, undo what had already been done. The final Protocol was signed on the 8th of September 1867, and the Treaty was to be concluded in the following year, after the first Parliamentary Ministry had assumed the direction of affairs. I submitted a scheme in accordance with the negotiations to the Cis-Leithan as well as the Hungarian Ministry. The latter agreed to it without raising any difficulties; but the former made many objections, and it was only after repeated negotiations and modifications of the scheme that the Convention was signed in the middle of 1868. A lively agitation, however, had in the meantime been set on foot in industrial circles, and the consequence was that the Convention was strongly objected to in the Reichsrath. I then succeeded in performing a feat which has perhaps no precedent in the history of Diplomacy: I prevailed upon the English Government to alter the Treaty which had already been signed, and to sign another. The exchange of notes and despatches lasted almost a year; the Austrian demands were repeatedly rejected; but the English Government finally agreed to them, and in the last days of 1869 the Treaty was accepted by the

Reichsrath, after having been formulated according to the wishes of the Committee.

These negotiations were by no means easy or agreeable. Some of the London despatches tried my patience to the utmost. I did not lose patience, however, as the breaking off of the negotiations would have been equivalent to a rupture with England, whom we had to reckon with in the East. Moreover, this was just the time when the reduction of the interest on the Austrian National Debt had excited great displeasure, nay, bitterness, in England more than elsewhere. But it produces an almost ludicrous effect to see in the despatches what complaints are made of the obstinacy of the very man who had been accused by his opponents of being a submissive instrument of English commercial policy. I do not make a merit of this negotiation, but I have no cause to be ashamed of it; and I had the more reason to be convinced that I acted conscientiously, as I was forced to do violence to my own opinions, which agreed on the whole with those prevalent before my arrival. In spite of the present current of opinion on the subject, which I am fully aware cannot be opposed by the Government, I find it impossible even now to reconcile myself to a system which professes to protect native industry and at the same time raises the prices of all the necessaries of life for the working man; a system which establishes new limitations for the protection of home produce, and yet removes from native industry the salutary influence of competition. In Saxony I had had experience of

Commercial Treaties and of Free Trade, and it was not unfavourable. But perhaps the conditions in that country were not quite normal; workmen and employers were accustomed to be industrious and to live frugally and abstemiously. When the French have to decide on the value of land, they say: 'Tant vaut l'homme, tant vaut la terre,' and they also say: 'Tant vaut l'homme, tant vaut le commerce.'

CHAPTER XI

1868

GALICIAN AFFAIRS, AND MY CONNECTION WITH THEM.

On my return from Gastein, the Emperor was at Salzburg. I waited on his Majesty there, and he said to me: 'The Empress and I intend to visit Galicia. I suppose you have no objection to make?'

The plan of this journey had not been unknown to me. It had been proposed, not at Vienna, but at Pesth. Count Adam Potocki, who was appointed 'Reisemarschall,' had done everything he could to further it. I have never been able to discover why Ministerial circles in Hungary identified themselves so completely with the Polish cause. The mutual hatred of Russia did not seem to me a sufficient explanation; yet I saw some eminent Poles—Count Goluchowski and Prince Czartoryski—in the Hungarian national costume, while the Hasner Ministry owed its sudden end chiefly to the circumstance that it

wished to dissolve the Galician Diet, and presented a demand to that effect to the Emperor at Buda.

Without mentioning these facts, of which I was fully aware, I replied to his Majesty that I had no objection to make, but that I only wished that their Majesties would by degrees honour not only Galicia, but all their other territories by their presence.

The Galician Diet met a few weeks later, and I knew that a committee was preparing a resolution which virtually demanded an autonomy totally opposed to the Constitution of the empire. I did not lose sight of the matter, and as soon as I had learned that the resolution had been accepted by the committee, I immediately advised the Emperor to give up his proposed journey. Not a single step was taken on the subject by Prince Auersperg, who was still virtually Minister-President, his resignation not yet having been accepted.* Giskra was inclined to expostulate with his Majesty, but he felt that his personal views in so delicate a question would be rather against him.

I received an answer saying that his Majesty had sent a telegram to the effect that if the resolution were accepted by the Diet, the Imperial journey would not take place.

Count Goluchowski did his best to prevent the passing of the resolution, but he was unsuccessful, and indeed it was a hopeless task, as he himself had been one of its supporters.

The Emperor Alexander II said shortly after-

* Yet he made the projected journey a further motive for resigning.

wards to Field Marshal Prince Thurn and Taxis, who had been sent to Warsaw to greet him in the name of the Emperor of Austria, that he was very glad the Imperial journey to Galicia had been given up, as he could not have looked upon it with indifference. I had certainly been warned that the people might hail the Emperor as King of Poland.

I neither expected nor received any thanks from the Czar, as his Majesty had behaved with demonstrative rudeness to me the first time I saw him, which was in London. Nor did I gain credit for my action from the Ministry and the Constitutional Party, while it raised a good deal of feeling against me in Polish and other circles.

I do not know what people now say of me in Galicia ; I do not expect much after the experiences I have gone through. And yet the Poles never had reason to complain of me. In 1867, when I was Minister-President, they obtained very considerable concessions, and it was I who proposed Dr Ziemialkowski to the Emperor for the post of Vice-President of the House of Deputies. I knew that Ziemialkowski had been unjustly confined in prison, and my recommendation led to his afterwards becoming a Minister, and being raised to the rank of Baron. When in the same year, 1868, Prince Napoleon was at Vienna, I gave a dinner in his honour, to which I invited Deputies from all parts of the empire. I can still see the Prince before me, with the Duc de Gramont by his side. I asked the latter to allow me to introduce Ziemialkowski to him, which I did as follows : ' M. de Ziemialkowski,

condamné autrefois à mort—je pense que nous sommes en règle.'

Later on, I was betrothed, so to say, to Galicia, but our marriage was never consummated. In 1870 the Commercial Chamber of Brody elected me member of the Diet. I was much pleased with this mark of sympathy, and begged Hofrath Klaczko, who had just been appointed to the Ministry, to draw up a reply by telegram in Polish. This attention, however, was very badly received. 'What?' exclaimed the good people of Brody; 'we have chosen him because we want a German to represent us in the Diet, and he speaks Polish!'

CHAPTER XII

1868

MILITARY LAWS.—TITLE OF COUNT.

Times were not barren of events when I had the honour to be Austrian Minister. The year 1868 was particularly fertile. When it opened, the Delegations were at Vienna; when it closed, at Pesth. In the spring there was anxiety and trouble in the Upper House on the subject of the Religious Laws; in the autumn there were struggles in the House of Deputies about the Military Defence Laws. I had to play an ambiguous part in the latter affair, although I did not appear in the capacity of Foreign Minister. Being a Deputy, I was chosen member of the Committee. The words I spoke in this capacity drew down upon me the reproach of painting things too darkly; but subsequent events did not justify that reproach.

During the session I received at Buda the following autograph letter from the Emperor :—

'Buda, *December* 5, 1868.

'My dear Baron von Beust,—The expiring year has given you further claims to a recognition of your services. Let my confidence be always an exhortation to you to persevere faithfully and boldly in your task. As an especial sign of my favour, I raise you to the hereditary title of Count, dispensing you from the usual payment of taxes.

'Francis Joseph.'

Thus we see that this year ended, like the previous one, with a happy retrospect and good hopes for the future. Both years were to become withered garlands, as I said in some verses written in 1871.

CHAPTER XIII

1869

ON THE PRESS IN GENERAL.—ON ARTICLES THAT CAST SHADOWS BEFORE.

It has often, and not unjustly, been alleged against the Press of the present day, that, independently of its immediate advantages and disadvantages, it will have an injurious effect on the impartiality and truth of history. This fear is not without foundation, for more than one historical work that has appeared of late years displays extreme prejudice, the views of the writer being influenced by party spirit. A century later, nay, perhaps in fifty years, there will no longer be, as hitherto, one history of the States of Europe, but two, three or four ; and it is difficult to conceive what the results will be for historical students.

But it must in justice be owned, when considering this and other questions relative to the Press, that not only is the Press itself to blame, but also the reading public. It has been maintained that the Press makes public opinion. To a great extent this is true; but it is equally certain that the character of a newspaper is determined by that of the public which reads it. If the Press is frivolous, this is because light literature sells better than serious and well-considered literature. During the negotiations on the Concordat, a Viennese comic periodical regaled its readers with numerous caricatures ridiculing the Pope and the Bishops, which greatly enhanced the difficulties of my by no means easy task. I sent for the Editor, and remonstrated with him on the unseemliness of the proceeding.

'We have no feeling,' was his answer, 'against the Pope and the Bishops; but this kind of thing sells just now; if your Excellency will guarantee us against loss, we will stop the caricatures at once.'

In another respect the reading public is also to blame. Newspapers are read very superficially and hurriedly, and they do not live longer than twenty-four hours. Few think of reading the more important articles carefully, and nobody dreams of preserving such articles as might afterwards be of use to the historian.

I am sure it will be thought pardonable that I myself never could find time to make such a collection during the period of my Ministry. I was all the more grateful to Dr Kuranda, a Deputy for whom I have

the highest esteem, that he induced the proprietors of the *Neue Freie Presse* to lend me a file of their papers, of which the reader will have found many traces in this work.

CHAPTER XIV

1869

MUTUAL DISARMAMENT.—MY VISIT TO THE QUEEN OF PRUSSIA AT BADEN.—VISITS OF THE CROWN PRINCE FREDERICK WILLIAM TO VIENNA AND OF THE ARCHDUKE CHARLES LOUIS TO BERLIN.

In the course of the summer I had a very disagreeable correspondence with Baron Werther, but I must do him the justice to own that he did not try to aggravate it. An agreement was made with Prussia for mutual disarmament. This was effected by an exchange of despatches between Berlin and Vienna. But it was remarkable that the Viennese journals considered my despatches as erring on the side of mildness, and as far more conciliatory in tone than those signed by the Under Secretary of State, von Thile. Soon afterwards I used my leave of absence for the purpose of paying a visit to the Empress of Germany at Baden-Baden. This step made a favour-

able impression. The Empress Augusta gave me more than once the opportunity of appreciating and admiring her lofty, refined, and conciliatory nature. I saw her Majesty repeatedly in London, and on the occasion of the silver wedding at Dresden, she said to me: 'I am the political *sœur grise*,' a very true and apt saying. The Empress Augusta knew how to soften many asperities during the German transformations of 1866 and 1871.

Soon afterwards, the Crown Prince Frederick William paid a visit to Vienna; the Archduke Charles Louis returned it in Berlin, and thus the year ended more favourably for the Austro-Prussian relations than it had begun. Nor has anything occurred since to disturb this friendly footing.

Those, however, who may still doubt, after all that I have said, who was the aggressor, would do well to peruse the following private letter:—

'Berlin, *December* 20, 1868.

'The attacks and calumnies to which we are exposed in the official Prussian Press, exceed all bounds; and not I alone, but all my colleagues, ask: What is Count Bismarck's object in allowing them? They can find no satisfactory answer; but as far as they can venture to be just, they all agree (M. Benedetti told me so yesterday) that this manœuvre should be met by no other attitude than that of contempt; we must leave the reply to our papers.

'It is quite impossible for me to follow Count Bismarck in all his tortuous machinations, or to per-

ceive his means and objects. In this respect I must claim your indulgence. But I perceive more and more distinctly the endeavour to disturb and destroy our good relations with France. This endeavour must also be connected with the news which Count Bismarck, as I firmly believe, first circulated, and then caused to be contradicted when it did not produce the desired effect—the news, I mean, that his visit to Dresden was occasioned by his desire to bring about a *rapprochement* with Austria. The same tendency may also be observed in his efforts to excite and confirm as much as possible the belief that Prussia is on the best of terms with France. He is even said to claim the merit of taking care that Paris should not indulge in dangerous illusions as to our influence and capacity of action. In contradiction to this display of confidence, we may allege the last rumours started by his organs in the Press that we joined with France in employing the difference between Turkey and Greece for the purpose of stirring up a war.

'I will not dwell on this subject, but before I conclude, I must beg leave to express the conviction, confirmed by observation and experience, that we have to deal with the same ill-will and hostility, in short, the same opposition, as caused the war of 1866, and that the Prussian Government probably regrets the concessions it made at Nikolsburg in proportion as the signs of our vitality increase. The feeling that we cannot be numbered among the dead of 1866 gives Count Bismarck no rest; and he will leave no

means untried by which he may expect to work successfully against our increasing power both at home and abroad. Nobody ventures to attack his Majesty the Emperor and King; but it is natural under the circumstances that your Excellency's name is constantly brought forward, and I am now expressing not only my own opinion, but the universal one, when I say that Count Bismarck would not shrink from any effort to injure and undermine, if he could, your position in the confidence of the Emperor and the nation. Accept, etc. WIMPFFEN.'

CHAPTER XV

1869

THE INDEPENDENT PRESS OF VIENNA TAKES MY PART IN THE DIFFERENCES WITH PRUSSIA.—RELATIONS WITH FRANCE AND GERMANY.—DIALOGUE WITH COUNT RECHBERG IN PARLIAMENT ON THE SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN AFFAIR.

The Independent Liberal Press of Vienna unanimously took my side in the controversy with the Prussian papers, and also on the occasion of the presentation of the Red Book to the Delegations in July 1869.

It was therefore the more remarkable that some members of the Austrian Delegation expressed themselves, not indeed in the sense of the Prussian papers, but with sympathy for an Austro-Prussian Alliance, and with strong suspicion of an alliance with France.

I think that my speech on this subject is of historical value, and my readers will perhaps not be sorry to read the following extracts from it:—

'A great deal may be said about alliances; and I fully understand the attractiveness of the idea which we hear so often mentioned, that Prussia is Austria's natural ally, that we should relinquish all connection with Germany, and that Prussia, which is Germany, will then be our ally in the East. That idea sounds well, and I do not doubt its sincerity. Nor do I doubt that Prussia will offer us the hand of friendship; but such a result must be the work of time, and events may influence it which cannot be calculated beforehand.

'In the East we have at present, as we must openly confess, an excellent friend in the French empire. Whether we do well to make an enemy of that friend when we are most in need of him, is a serious question; and it is also an open question whether Germany would be able to join in the services we expect of her when we want them.

'Austria-Hungary is now undergoing a process of regeneration.

'We know no other policy than that of friendship for those who sympathise with that process; but we cannot entertain the same feeling for those who are cold or indifferent to it. (Applause.)

'In conclusion, I will allude to a short episode in to-day's debate in which three members discussed a question relative to the Schleswig-Holstein War.

'I feel myself called upon to give my opinion on this subject, as I was not a mere spectator of the events of those days.

'I fully understand and appreciate all the motives

which then prompted Austrian policy. I know it was very difficult to alter that policy, as that would have involved a deviation from a signed treaty; but I must agree with the Deputy Dr Rechbauer that there was no danger of a European War. (Hear, hear.)

'If Europe looked on calmly when Austria and Prussia made war in opposition to the public opinion of Germany, would she not have looked on with equal calmness, if the war had been undertaken at the desire of the German people? For this it would have been requisite that the Federal principle should have been made paramount—a difficult task, but one that would have been of the greatest use. I conclude with a hearty acquiescence in the concluding words of Count Rechberg's speech: "The best alliances are to be sought in Austria herself; it is here that we shall find allies, and the more we do so, the more successful we shall be in parrying attacks from abroad."' (Great applause.)

I owe it to my esteemed predecessor, Count Rechberg, not to suppress the objection he made to my remarks on the Schleswig-Holstein affair; but I claim leave in return to append my reply:—

COUNT RECHBERG

'I am very grateful to the Chancellor of the Empire for his judgment on the difference that arose between Dr Rechbauer and myself, and also for his recognition of the difficulties with which the Imperial Government had then to contend.

'Only on one point must I reply. He says that

no European War would have ensued had Austria placed herself at the head of Germany. I would refer him to the despatch of the English Cabinet declaring that any deviation from the Treaty of London would be a *casus belli.* The German Confederation did not acknowledge the Treaty of London. Austria was bound by it; and if she had departed from it, she would have made an enemy of England.'

COUNT BEUST.

'I will not dispute what has just been said; but I am in a position to produce the English Blue Book, in which there is a document to a different effect. In a despatch sent by the English Ambassador in Paris to London, he states that France would not take part in a war, as she knew what it was to begin an unpopular war with Germany.' (Hear, hear.)

CHAPTER XVI

1869

THE PANORAMA YEAR.—THE EMPEROR'S JOURNEY TO AGRAM AND TRIESTE.—VISIT TO BADEN-BADEN, AND MEETING WITH PRINCE GORTSCHAKOFF AT OUCHY.

In a certain sense I may call the year 1869 a Panorama year. Numerous and brilliant scenes pass before my mind when I think of that year; Agram, Trieste, Baden, Lausanne, Orsova, Rustchuk, Varna, Constantinople, Athens, Jaffa, Jerusalem, Port Said, Suez, Cairo, Alexandria, Brindisi, Florence.

The Emperor's Eastern journey was an unexpected pleasure for me, and left indelible impressions on my mind. One of the many accusations made against me was that I had proposed that Imperial journey so that I might enjoy the pleasure of taking part in it. The truth is that I was not against it, but that I never thought of myself in connection with it. The Paris journey showed me what a favourable impression was

made in foreign countries by the Emperor's presence, and how many moral conquests it might achieve. The idea of the journey originated quite naturally, after the Crown Prince of Prussia had been sent to the opening of the Suez Canal; and Austria's interests in that event, as compared to those of Germany, would be represented by the presence of the Austrian Emperor with the Russian Crown Prince. I will not, however, begin with the last, but with the first of these scenes.

The Emperor and the Empress went in the month of March to Agram, the capital of Croatia, which had been assigned to Hungary in the Agreement. Owing to the Prague incident in the preceding year, I asked and obtained the favour of being allowed to appear with the Emperor at Agram. Count Andrassy had strongly blamed Prince Auersperg's irritability on the previous occasion. I took him at his word, and I must acknowledge that he showed a due appreciation of my conduct, so that our meeting at Agram was very cordial. Circumstances were certainly very different on the other side of the Leitha. The agreement with Croatia was a *fait accompli*. I have proved in another place that I never arranged any agreement at Prague; and the circumstance that numerous deputations were sent to me at Agram, proved that the appearance of the Minister of Foreign Affairs there would not justify a belief that he wished to meddle unwarrantably in internal affairs. When I appeared in the Diet, those present cheered me.

In the apartments occupied by their Majesties the body-guard consisted of the 'Red Cloaks,' or Seresans. On the Emperor asking me what impression they made upon me, I said 'I would rather meet them in the antechamber than in a lonely wood.'

The Emperor next proceeded to the district called 'The Military Frontier,' and as the reorganisation of this district was not yet complete, I had to retain Count Andrassy to take part in the conferences on the subject. As to the schools of the district, they were in a far more satisfactory condition than in the more 'civilised' territories of the empire. I was requested to join the conferences, which was a further proof of the liberal views of the Hungarians as to intervention in internal affairs; and I saw no reason to oppose the projected reorganisation. The recollections of 1848 and 1849 were then not yet obliterated, and the use of the frontier regiments was still vividly remembered. I considered that if it is undesirable to lead people to think that one has a secret motive, it is certainly absurd to allow the belief in such motives to exist after they have long ceased to operate. This was the case at that time.

The Emperor next went from Fiume to Pola and Trieste, to which latter city I proceeded from Vienna in the company of Count Taaffe and von Plener. It was a splendid spring, more like May than March. An eminent inhabitant of Trieste, Baron Rivoltella, offered me his house, where I was received with the greatest hospitality. He was a great lover of art, and had a collection of valuable statues, mostly of nymphs

and goddesses, and my sitting and bed rooms were full of them. On leaving him, I wrote in his book :

'Adieu donc, cher Monsieur Rivoltelle,
Adieu, Maison hospitalière,
Adieu encore, oh toutes mes belles !
Pourquoi, hélas ! étiez vous de pierre ?'

The railways which have succeeded in depriving us of the real Venice, the real Rigi, and the real Vesuvius, have also deprived Trieste of a considerable portion of its old charm. I had only seen it once before in 1832. I remember to this day the hill of Opschina. After driving a long time through a stony wilderness, the curtain rose, and we saw the Adriatic before us. I remember the whole scene had so Neapolitan an air, that I was humming the tunes of the *Muette de Portici*. We arrived at Trieste without even noticing that we were in the vicinity of the sea.

When the Delegations were over, I asked for a short period of leave to go to Baden and to Switzerland. My object was to pay a visit to the Queen of Prussia, and then to meet Prince Gortschakoff at Ouchy.

In a former passage I mentioned the Empress Augusta in terms of the highest esteem. Her Majesty had known me in Berlin, and I could reckon on a gracious reception. My stay at Baden produced the desired effect of appeasing the irritation of Prussia. Various papers said that I went from there to Paris, and that I had even been seen at Saint Cloud, whereas I had only paid a short visit to the

family of Count Pourtalès at Ruprechtsau, near Strasburg, proceeding thence to Switzerland, where I saw Prince Gortschakoff at Ouchy, on the Lake of Geneva. The meeting had a good result, and cleared up many misunderstandings, but the consequences were not lasting, as the history of the following year showed.

My relations with Prince Gortschakoff form one of the most remarkable passages in my official life. He was, like Prince Bismarck, one of my decided opponents; but I confess that the hostility of Prince Bismarck was far more sympathetic to me than that of the Russian statesman; not only because the Chancellor of the German empire thereby conferred a much greater, though undeserved honour on me; but also because I recognised in his antagonism only political opposition, whereas Prince Gortschakoff always showed personal dislike and irritability. I hope I have shown in various passages of this work that I really did not possess the anti-Prussian feeling attributed to me; but that did not prevent me from opposing at times, from duty and conviction, the action of the Prussian Government more strenuously than other statesmen may have done. I did not behave thus towards Russia: I repulsed her on certain occasions, but I never attacked her. My first acquaintance with Prince Gortschakoff dates from the time of the Crimean War, when he was Ambassador in Vienna. He came from that city to Dresden, and was very enthusiastic at the reply which I had just given to Lord Clarendon's

unwarrantable interference in the affairs of the German Confederation. If I then stood on the side of Russia, this was not due to a feeling of attachment to her or of aversion to Austria, but to a decided suspicion of a policy, then pursued by the latter power, the results of which I dreaded for her sake. I know that the Emperor Nicholas said more than once in his last days that that Saxon despatch was the only thing that had then given him pleasure. In 1859, the Emperor Alexander came with Prince Gortschakoff to Dresden, and I heard nothing but compliments. But when Prince Gortschakoff, on the occasion of the Italian War, directed the German Governments in a most dictatorial circular to observe neutrality, I gave him the same lesson that I had given to Lord Clarendon.

This despatch ranks first among the sins for which I have never received absolution. After the outbreak of the Polish Insurrection in 1862, the answer I sent to France and England, declining to join in an intervention, found favour with Gortschakoff. But after the suppression of the Insurrection, it happened that a large number of Polish refugees were staying at Dresden, and I again received a very insolent demand that they should be at once expelled. The Russian envoy was at the same time instructed to remind me of the solidarity of monarchical interests. I begged M. de Kakoschkin to send Prince Gortschakoff the following answer: 'I remember the time when the King of Sardinia invaded Austrian territory during a time of peace. Although this King had not under-

taken anything against Russia, the Emperor Nicholas immediately recalled his envoy at Turin' (the same M. de Kakoschkin) 'and gave the Sardinian envoy in St Petersburg his passports. This is what I consider solidarity of monarchical interests. But it happened later on that the next King of Sardinia, who had not been in any way injured by Russia, sent his troops to the Crimea to wage war upon Russia. Soon afterwards, another Italian sovereign, who had declined an invitation to take part in that war, was dethroned by the King of Sardinia, and Russia hastened to acknowledge the usurpation. In such circumstances,' I concluded, 'there is no solidarity of monarchical interests, and the Government of a small country can only fulfil the task of living in peace and harmony with its subjects, and of not offending public sentiment.' This reply also was never forgotten. Finally, I could not avoid putting the Russian Ambassador in his proper place at the Conference of London, where I was Plenipotentiary of the German Confederation, when he wished almost to deprive me of the right of speaking, on the ground that the Confederation was not engaged in war with Denmark.

All this made a deep impression on Prince Gortschakoff, accustomed as he was to flattery and obsequiousness. What I said in the circular I issued on taking office in Austria—that I brought into my present position, neither likes nor dislikes, but only the experiences of my past career—I also proved towards Russia, and I seriously endeavoured to establish a good understanding with her.

Prince Gortschakoff was never a sincere friend of Austria. Without wishing to diminish the credit due to the diplomatic ability of my successor, I do not doubt that it was owing to the fact of his taking my place that Count Andrassy was so remarkably well received in Berlin by the Russian Chancellor, in spite of the part he played in 1849, and of his sympathies in 1870 having been directed, not against Germany, but against Russia.

At first, towards the end of 1866, when I was just entering on my career as an Austrian Minister, things certainly assumed a favourable aspect, and I was told that Prince Gortschakoff said : 'L'Autriche est dans nos eaux.' But, singularly enough, a new crime was now imputed to me, the concession which I wished to be made to Russia of a revision of the Treaty of Paris with regard to the Black Sea. I have developed my views on this subject in another passage, where I have pointed out that a European control of the internal affairs of Turkey, which I considered imperative, could only be possible with the cordial co-operation of Russia. The Emperor Alexander came to London in 1874, when I was Ambassador there, and showed me his displeasure in a demonstrative manner, partly by the coldness and abruptness with which he addressed me, and partly by paying marked attention to the colleagues who were standing near me, especially to the Turkish Ambassador. I often recalled to mind in 1877 and 1878 the words he said to Musurus Pasha :— 'Désormais il ne peut plus avoir entre nous le moindre

malentendu.' But I was struck by one remarkable incident. During the ceremony of the presentation of the Freedom of the City to the Czar, it happened that on entering the smoking room I found his Majesty without his Russian suite; and on that occasion he addressed me very politely, and spoke to me for some time. I can find no other explanation for this change of manner than that the treatment I received did not arise from the Emperor's own initiative, but from the wishes of his Chancellor.

CHAPTER XVII

1869

THE DESPATCHES ON THE CONCORDAT AND THE ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL.—PRINCE SANGUSZKO.

The Red Book gave me an opportunity of explaining the question of the Concordat in its fullest extent, by publishing a despatch addressed to the Austrian Ambassador at Rome, Count Trauttmansdorff.* The chief author of this despatch was the Sektionschef Herr von Hofmann.† Dr Rechbauer, for whom I generally had great esteem, looked upon this despatch as a diplomatic 'Canossa;' but the Italian Ambassador, who was certainly no pilgrim to Canossa,

* See Appendix B.

† During my stay at Gastein, Baron Hofmann drew up the historical part of the despatch, and it was turned into French at Ischl, with my assistance, by Baron Altenburg.

was of a different opinion, as the following note which he sent me will show:

13 *Juillet* 1869.

'Cher Comte,—Je viens de lire votre admirable note sur la question du Concordat. C'est une page d'histoire qui marquera dans les annales de la civilisation. Je viens de l'expédier à Florence: envoyez-moi un autre exemplaire. Merci, cher Comte, de me permettre de vous appeler mon ami.

'Joachim Napoléon Pepoli.'

An amusing reminiscence here occurs to me. In the Upper House I often met Prince Sanguszko, a true *grand seigneur*, but a very eccentric one. The position of Privy Councillor (Geheimrath) was gladly accepted even by the greatest noblemen in Austria, and Prince Sanguszko expressed a wish to have it. I recommended him for the position; the Emperor agreed, and the Prince came on purpose from Galicia to Vienna to be sworn in. His Majesty being absent from Vienna, I was empowered to administer the oath. I prepared the ceremony with all due solemnity, placing a crucifix and lighted candles on a table. Sektionschef von Hofmann read the formula of the oath; but when I gave the sign for the Prince to swear, he refused. At length Baron Hofmann persuaded him to give way. Immediately afterwards the Prince asked to speak to me alone in my room; and when I had invited him to sit down, he said: 'Vous m' avez fait prêter un serment, et j'ai dû jurer

entre autres choses de toujours dire la vérité. Eh bien, je m'en vais vous la dire.' Whereupon he made some remarks on my policy which were anything but flattering.

CHAPTER XVIII

1869

THE IMPERIAL JOURNEY TO THE EAST.

I will not weary my readers with repetitions of what they have read or may read in books of travel. My descriptions would not be very minute, as in the short space of six weeks we visited Turkey, Greece, Palestine, Egypt, and Italy. But I will not resist the temptation of wandering from the beaten track into by-paths of which there is no mention in books of travel, and on which I hope the reader will not be unwilling to follow me.

Such an expedition in the suite of a sovereign has its disadvantages, as one of the greatest charms of every journey, freedom and independence, must in

such a case unavoidably be limited. But there is one great advantage which attends such a journey—an advantage of particular value in the East. The inhabitants, who are but rarely seen by the ordinary traveller, show themselves out of curiosity. Part of this curiosity was on my account; I was told in Jerusalem that 'the people wished to see the Grand Vizier of the White Sultan.' I feel called upon gratefully to place on record the fact how little unnecessary *gêne* the Emperor imposed upon his suite, and how solicitous his Majesty was for their comfort and welfare. This anxiety gave rise to an amusing telegraphic mistake. During the journey from Constantinople to Athens, the Emperor, who knew how much I suffered from sea-sickness, telegraphed from his ship to that of the Ministers to enquire how I was. The telegraphic machinery was defective, and the answer was: 'Unverschämt' (impudent) instead of 'Er schläft' (he is asleep).

The tour began with a night journey by rail from Pesth to Bazias, where some members of the Servian Ministry were present to receive the Emperor. They were accompanied by Herr von Kallay, who began his career during my administration as Consul-General at Belgrade. He was recommended to me by Count Andrassy, and he proved most valuable. Herr von Kallay afterwards displayed even greater talents in a higher sphere. Latterly, before I left the Imperial service, he was my official superior. But I am of opinion that he had more cause to praise me when I was his superior than I had cause to praise

him when he was mine—an experience which was not a solitary one.

What I did not like during the time Herr von Kallay was Consul-General at Belgrade was the policy carried on by the Hungarians on their own account, which was, perhaps unjustly, attributed to him. Ali Pasha said to me at Constantinople: 'We have every confidence in the Cabinet of Vienna and in you; but we become anxious when we see what is done in Servia by people at Pesth.' He was alluding to a project then on foot by which the administration of Bosnia would have been confided to Servia. It did not originate in any initiative of Herr von Kallay's, for it was communicated to me early in 1867, long before he went to Belgrade, on the occasion of a mission on which Count Edmund Zichy was sent to Prince Michael. Perhaps this retrospect is not without interest at the present moment, when Servia so obviously desires to possess Bosnia. When I met Prince Milan, the present King, some years ago, he expressed his gratitude to me. I had certainly been of service to his dynasty, for it was through my intervention, not only that the citadel of Belgrade was evacuated, but also that the Porte acknowledged by a firman the hereditary rights of the Obrenovitch family after the accession of Prince Milan. Such an acknowledgment seems of no value now, but in those days it was thought very important. The title of sovereign was long desired before it was obtained; and almost portentous, because anything but imposing, was the proclamation by Tchernayeff after a war

which was not exactly a triumph for the Servian arms.*

Servia was not without a rival in her Bosnian aspirations. During the short stay I made in London in 1881, I paid a visit to Lady Borthwick, the wife of Sir Algernon Borthwick, Editor of the *Morning Post*, and a great favourite in London society. Sir Algernon took part in the previous year in the demonstration of Dulcigno on an English ship, and he wrote a book on it, of which he gave me a copy. He related how he paid a visit at Cettinye to Prince Nikita,† and how the Prince said he greatly regretted that Mr Gladstone had not come into office some years sooner, as in that case Bosnia would have met with a different fate. The book was interesting enough for me to send it to Vienna, but it does not seem to have affected the unlimited confidence which was felt there with regard to the Balkan Principalities.

The Black Mountains were the source of many disasters to Austria. In 1853 Omar Pasha advanced with an Army of 60,000 men to put an end at any price to the mountain State, which had become a very unpleasant neighbour. Perhaps it would have been better if he had been allowed to carry out his intention. But Field-Marshal Count Leiningen was sent on a special mission to Constantinople, and that

* At that time I composed the following quatrain for a lady who was an enthusiastic admirer of Servia :

'L'empire fondé par Guillaume
Est jeune, et il fut conquérant ;
Le plus vieux parmi les royaumes
Sans conquête, est celui de Mille-ans.

† Of Montenegro.

mission scared Montenegro. Whether from jealousy or emulation, Leiningen's mission was followed by Menschikoff's. This gave birth to the Crimean War; the Crimean War to the Italian War; and the Italian War to the German War.

Even before I entered the Imperial service, I knew that this was the chain of events, and I do not deny that I consequently did not entertain very lively sympathies for the Prince of Montenegro. Yet he had no cause to complain of me. It was during my tenure of office that expensive roads were constructed with Austrian money on Montenegrin territory. Even then Montenegro was demanding access to the sea 'for her exports.' But when these roads were completed, there was nothing to export.

I remember a rather amusing intermezzo in this connection. Quite at the beginning of my Ministry, it happened one day that 'the Prince of Montenegro' was announced to me. I advanced towards him, requesting him to enter, and I saw a martial, commanding figure in a magnificent costume covered with gold embroidery, and with a sword whose hilt sparkled with jewels. I spoke to him in German, French, and Italian. He replied in an unknown tongue. Fortunately, an interpreter was found who understood Montenegrin, and I was informed that my visitor was not the reigning Prince, but a member of the dethroned dynasty. I owed the visit to the circumstance that his Highness had a dispute with his hotelkeeper about the bill. I could not help telling the interpreter that the national costume should have been a sufficient

guarantee for the hotelkeeper, but I succeeded in settling the difficulty on the spot.

But it is time that I should return to Bazias and take sail in the Imperial ship. I cannot sufficiently recommend to all admirers of grand scenery an excursion on the lower part of the Danube. Gigantic rocks, as large as those of the Klamm of Gastein or of the Via Mala in Switzerland, descend, not like them into a small mountain stream, but into a magnificent, broad river, commanding Alpine views.

It was still day-light when we reached Orsova, and someone remarked that it was in that neighbourhood that Kossuth buried the Hungarian regalia. Others said it was elsewhere. I remarked in a whisper to my colleague, the Hungarian Minister-President: 'You must know all about that,' but he did not answer.

There was then no Kingdom of Roumania, nor even a recognised Roumania, and the official designation of the country was still 'Principautés Danubiennes,' or 'Moldo-Valachie.' There were prolonged negotiations as to the recognition of the name 'Roumania,' and the Roumanians could not complain of our attitude in regard to that question, or, indeed, any other. When I was Ambassador in London, I received instructions to support the wishes of Bucharest. On that occasion, my Turkish colleague, Musurus Pasha, for whom I have a great esteem, and who has all the *finesse* of a Phanariote, reproached me as follows: 'C'est singulier qu'à une époque où des grands empires prennent deux noms au lieu d'un,

des pays qui en ont déjà deux ne puissent pas se contenter de les garder.' I shook my head, but at heart I applauded.

At that time other Roumanian affairs were on the order of the day, as, for instance, the coining of medals and the distribution of orders. In Constantinople also I advocated the Roumanian cause. After a review which took place on the Asiatic side, near Unkiar Skelessi, there was a dinner at a palace in the vicinity, and afterwards I was sitting with Ali Pasha opposite a magnificent grove of palm trees on a real summer evening early in November. I had been talking to him for some time on behalf of the Danubian Principalities, when he suddenly remarked: 'Écoutez donc, je vous parle sérieusement. Pourquoi ne les prenez vous pas? Nous vous les cédons de grand cœur.'

Count Andrassy, who was standing by, protested very decidedly against such an idea, which showed that he thought the Grand Vizier was in earnest. Hungary might well think that she had enough Roumanians in her country; but for the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy this consideration could not be decisive. At the time when Ali Pasha expressed this idea, it was too late, but there were moments when it might easily have been realised. It is difficult to conceive how Austria could, during the Crimean War, have occupied the Danubian Principalities only to evacuate them—the old Italian tradition! At first sight it may seem as if the acquisition of these Principalities at the cost of a

friendly power would have been a monstrous proceeding. But with more careful consideration the question assumes a different aspect. Austria would have had to take precautions; but a tolerably skilful diplomatist would have been certain of success. It would have been necessary first to consider what attitude the other powers would have assumed in the matter. France and England, whose voices were at that time predominant in Eastern affairs, could not have opposed a solution which would have been most effectual in preventing another war between Turkey and Russia, as it would have placed Russia at a considerable distance from the Turkish frontier. Prussia was not then in a position to give a decisive opinion. As to Russia, she would certainly not have desired such a change; but Russia was abandoned, even before Sebastopol, by all Europe, so that her consent would not have been essential. On the other hand, the Danubian Principalities were not Russian territory, and the useless cession of part of Bessarabia was much more offensive to Russia's national pride than the transfer of the Principalities to Austria would have been. As to Turkey it should be remembered that the Danubian Principalities were not a Turkish Province, and the Porte has allowed itself to be persuaded that Bosnia is better in other hands. Why, therefore should it not have been open to similar persuasion at another time? It might easily be shown that the acquisition of Bosnia was a far less natural transaction, for during the war of 1877 it was Austria who was under obligations to Russia, and not

Turkey, who had no reason for showing gratitude. But the advantage Turkey would have obtained by relinquishing the Danubian Principalities would have been far more indisputable than that which she obtained by the loss of Bosnia. She would have obtained full compensation for the only benefit she derived from the possession of the Principalities—the tribute—and also a friendly neighbour not given to agitating among her people. At that time the affairs of the East were settled under the pressure of the Western Powers. It was most important, therefore, that Austria should make her conditions before undertaking the occupation of the Principalities, which cost so many men and so much money, and which only secured the success of England and France in the Crimean War. If the Western Powers had been bound to fulfil Austria's conditions, there would have been no reason for withdrawing the Austrian troops from the Principalities. Instead of this, the sole reward for all Austria's exertions was that which afterwards proved so illusory—the neutralisation of the Black Sea, fine promises from the Sultan for his Christian subjects, and the liberation of the mouths of the Danube from Russian control, but not the admission to them of the ships of the Powers—in which question the Prince of Hohenzollern, now King of Roumania, has unfortunately more to say, and says it, than the Emperor of Austria.

It cannot be denied that our most vital interests on the Lower Danube extend beyond Salonica. Even in those days there was a suspicion of this, for when I

happened to meet Count Buol at Golling, near Salzburg, in 1855, he said to me: 'We know what we must have.' But those who make no effort, obtain nothing.

Prince Charles was then abroad, and the Minister Cogolniceano received us in his master's absence. He was afterwards my colleague in Paris, and was not then so decided on the Danubian question as he showed himself to be afterwards.

On a splendid morning we landed at Rustchuk. I was much struck by the fact that in that town, so distant from the centre of the Mahommedan world, the men still wore the old Turkish costume with the turban, while it is scarcely ever seen in Constantinople.

We were received not only by Baron Prokesch, but also by Ali Pasha and by Omar Pasha, two most interesting personages. Omar Pasha was originally a serjeant in a frontier regiment, from which he was discharged without a pension. Now he was a Field-Marshal, and famous through his operations against the Russians in 1854. He had not forgotten his German in the least, and he was fond of expatiating in glowing terms on the beauties of his harem, like a true son of Mahommed. I remember it was he who recommended to the Emperor Baron Rodic as the most suitable Governor of Dalmatia. In later years when, during the war, the measures of the Dalmatian Government with regard to the landing in the harbour of Klek gave ground for complaints at Con-

stantinople, I always succeeded in silencing my colleague Musurus in London by reminding him of Omar Pasha's recommendation.

I was still more interested by Ali Pasha. All that I had heard about his great accomplishments and his engaging manners was surpassed by the reality. Our intercourse during the journey and at Constantinople was most agreeable, and I have reason to believe that he was sincere in the compliments he paid me.

Our journey to Varna by rail was very rapid. I remember being greatly struck at seeing a ploughing-machine of the newest construction being used in a field in the much abused dominions of the Sultan.

Towards evening the Emperor embarked at Varna on the Sultan's yacht *Sultanié*, which was decorated with extraordinary magnificence, and had been presented to the Sultan by the Khedive Ismail. Ali Pasha said it was 'one of the Khedive's extravagant whims,' but the Sultan did not disdain to accept the present. At Varna three vessels of the Austrian fleet, the *Greif*, the *Elizabeth*, and the *Gorgnano* waited for us. The Ministers had the honour of passing the night on the *Sultanié*. I had often been told of the prevalence on the Black Sea of storms and sea-sickness; and I was the more agreeably surprised to find a perfectly calm sea, and a beautiful full moon. We passed some hours of the night on deck, and my memory was haunted by the commencing and closing verses of a poem of Lamartine's on

the old Eastern theme of an attempted elopement from the seraglio being punished with death:

'La lune était sereine,
Et jouait dans les flots'.

CHAPTER XIX

1869

CONTINUATION OF THE IMPERIAL JOURNEY TO THE EAST.—CONSTANTINOPLE.

When we woke next morning we found ourselves in the Bosphorus; and we reached Constantinople at noon. The first view of the city has a much more imposing aspect from the side of the Sea of Marmora, and in that respect we were not fortunate. But it was a most favourable circumstance that the Emperor's arrival attracted thousands of large and small boats, and the sea was covered with flags, sails and tents. The weather was superb, and I was able to telegraph to Vienna: 'Arrivée de l'Empereur par un temps splendide, spectacle imposant.'

The Sultan drove up to meet the Emperor, and he came on board our ship. I have mentioned him in my recollections of 1867. His people have been very ungrateful to him, for he not only spent large sums on luxuries, with which he has been justly reproached, but he also created a respectable fleet, which was afterwards not sufficiently used. His tragic end made a deep impression upon me. He is said to have opened his veins with a pair of scissors that were placed in his bath-room ; but the popular opinion was probably correct: 'qu'au lieu de s'être suicidé il avait été suicidé.'

Very little was gained by his death. Murad, whom we had known in Vienna as a man in the best of health, mental and physical, though somewhat reserved, could not even go through the ceremony of coronation, as a painful ulcer prevented him from putting on the sword of Osman ; and he subsequently became insane, or perhaps was only reported to be so. The greatest fault that Turkey could commit, was committed during the reign of his successor. This was the reduction of half the interest on the Turkish Loans, a measure which was not brought about by necessity, and which alienated foreign countries, especially England.*

We saw the Sultan every day at dinner, when he

* In London I wrote the following Quatrains :

AZIZ:

Honneur à sa mémoire, son trépas fut beau,
Car il est mort en Grand-Seigneur,
Est si on lui a donné des ciseaux,
C'est qu'on voulait qu'il fut ailleurs.

had the Emperor on his right hand, and Ali on his left, the latter acting as interpreter, as the Sultan did not understand a word of French. But his Majesty had a great taste for music, and we heard more than once a march of his composition, which was very original.

The reception took place in the magnificent Dolma Bagché Palace, where the Sultan then resided. It was most exquisitely fitted up, and it commanded a fine view of the sea. Apartments in it were assigned to the Emperor, and also to Prince Hohenlohe and Count Bellegarde. The Ministers were quartered in another building, also styled a palace—*lucus à non lucendo*—where there was neither comfort nor elegance. Andrassy conjured up dreams of Gulnares and mandolines, but in the night the reality proved very disagreeable and far from poetical. I will not be ungrateful, however, especially as the arrangements were not made by the Turkish Government; and I will not forget that I was presented with a beautiful Arab horse.

MURAD:

On dit qu'il souffre mort et martyre
D'un clou. Cela ne peut m'étonner.
Si c'est son clou qui le fait souffrir,
C'est que nous le lui avons rivé.

Et c'est cependant ce clou, je vous le dis,
Qui de Murad a fait un bon apôtre,
Lorsque les softas sur le trône l'ont mis,
Ils ont pensé: un clou chasse l'autre.

HAMID:

Et lui aussi? qui le remplace? chose fatale,
Sait-on jamais dans ce pays!
Si autre part cela va de mâle en mâle,
Chez eux cela va de mal en pis.

In Constantinople, where Baron Haymerle* was the First Secretary to the embassy, Baron Prokesch was in his element, and as usual he neglected no opportunity of contrasting Turkey with the rest of Europe —the East with the West—as if they were light and darkness. When I was Minister in Saxony I was frequently with him at Gastein, and I once heard him say at a table d'hôte: 'These Turks have much sense. I know Ali, who has a charming wife. She was expecting her confinement, and she said one day to her husband: "Dear husband, I have brought you a young slave." What European wife would be equally obliging?' This reminds me of a story told at the time of the Crimean War. The wife of one of the Ambassadors, who was of a jealous disposition, had an audience of the Sultana Validé, the Sultan's mother, who received her surrounded by her slaves. The Ambassadress was struck by the beauty of one of them, a Circassian, and could not help exclaiming: 'Quelle belle créature!' Whereupon the Sultana said: 'Voulez-vous que je vous en fasse cadeau?' 'Y pensez-vous?' rejoined the Ambassadress; 'et mon mari?' 'Vous ne l'aimez donc pas?' remarked the Sultana.

I had interviews with Ali Pasha as to certain

* When Baron Haymerle became Minister, some official papers stated that Count Andrassy was the first to discover his capacity, which until then had not been appreciated. The fact is that Baron Haymerle was promoted three times during the five years of my administration. He was secretary to the Embassy at Berlin, then first secretary to that at Constantinople, and afterwards Ambassador at Athens and the Hague. He was grateful to me, and did me full justice. I must add that I had no cause to complain of him when he was Minister, nor was I inconvenienced by the absence of timely instructions, as was frequently the case with other Ministers.

differences which had then arisen between the Porte and the Khedive, and which were arranged mainly through our intervention in Constantinople and in Cairo ; and also with regard to the attitude of Turkey towards the Dalmatian rebellion. I succeeded in persuading Ali to send troops to the frontier with orders not to allow anyone to pass, and the rebellion was consequently soon put down. It must be admitted that we did not return this service during the Bosnian insurrection, for our frontier was perfectly open. But the step taken by Turkey was advantageous from an economical point of view, as the maintenance of Turkish soldiers is less expensive than that of Turkish fugitives, as the Delegations found out to their cost.

Among the members of the Diplomatic Corps whom I saw at Constantinople was a man who has since been much spoken of, General Ignatieff. I had made his acquaintance previously at Vienna, and I afterwards met him in London. As there was no occasion to open a negotiation with him, I was able to enjoy his attractive conversation without reserve. He was fond of opening his narratives with these words : 'Vous savez que mon grand défaut est de toujours dire la vérité.'

As elsewhere, we found our time at Constantinople far too short. Five days are not enough even for the most hurried visit. I have a particularly vivid recollection of the day when a review was held on the Asiatic side, near Unkiar Skelessi, whither we were conveyed by steamer. The demeanour and appear-

ance of the troops were admirable, and so far the Emperor could find no fault; but for one strange surprise he was not prepared. After we had ridden down the front in the suite of the two sovereigns, everyone alighted. The Sultan conducted the Emperor to an elevated platform, and then the review began. This must have been the only time in his life that the Emperor witnessed a review in an armchair.

On leaving the platform, I looked in vain for my horse, and I had at last to content myself with another, which had a saddle with Turkish stirrups. These are very uncomfortable on account of their great width, and possibly through my unfamiliarity with them, I fidgeted the horse, and he galloped off with me, tearing through the large and elegantly dressed crowd. Such an incident would in Western Europe give rise to a good deal of complaint and some swearing. But the Turks politely stepped aside, leaving a free space along which I was carried, more rapidly than I desired, to the Palace, where dinner was served.

As we were returning in the steamer, the passage lasting more than an hour, there was incessant firing from the hills and a brilliant display of fireworks. At the same time we were informed that the Government officials had not received their pay for eighteen months. 'Is it possible,' someone asked, 'that such a state of things can exist in the latter part of the nineteenth century?' 'As it does exist,' I replied, 'there is no reason why it should not continue.'

What is so lamentable in that country, so highly

favoured by nature, is that so much that is good and great is due to the very agencies that make such things possible. In Turkey boundless authority and implicit obedience are still in full vigour; and the much-enduring Turk is ready to perform admirable services in obedience to his master's commands. It is well-known that honesty is far more frequently found among the Mahommedan than among the Christian inhabitants of Turkey, and we constantly had proofs of the fact. The sovereign himself is a well-meaning prince; what is evil in the country is mainly to be traced to the intermediate class between master and servant.

CHAPTER XX

1869

CONTINUATION OF THE IMPERIAL JOURNEY TO THE EAST.—ATHENS, JAFFA, JERUSALEM, THE SUEZ CANAL.

After leaving Constantinople we had an odious companion, sea-sickness. I suffered so much on my way to Athens, that when we landed at the Piræus King George of Greece was quite alarmed at my appearance. But the worst was yet to come.

Our very short stay at Athens was chiefly useful to me in so far as it enabled me to dispatch some urgent business, and I had barely time to visit the Acropolis. From the Acropolis one perceives a vast landscape, said to include even the field of Marathon, and strongly reminding one of Rottmann's celebrated pictures. Thence one can fly on the wings of imagination to ancient Hellas; but it is less easy to do so from modern Athens, which is much more like a

Franconian town, like Anspach for instance, than a Greek settlement.

I am glad to say that there was no occasion for negotiations. Even then, though with some diffidence, Greece was beginning to long for Epirus and Thessaly. Of course I remained completely passive. But as I remembered later on, what most amused me was that the chief argument for an extension of frontier was the allegation that it was impossible to put down brigandage; while enquiry has proved that the hordes of robbers that infested Greece did not come from the other side of the frontier, but started from Grecian territory to plunder the Turks! This argument might also be applied to Italy, as it is not from Austrian territory that the Irredentists make the Italian frontier insecure.

My interviews with King George of Greece made an agreeable impression upon me. I had seen his Majesty previously at Vienna, I saw him again in London and Paris, and I always found occasion to admire his strong and acute judgment.

Immediately after a state dinner at Court, the journey was resumed to Jaffa. It lasted four days and four nights, of which I passed three days and as many nights in the most lamentable condition. Andrassy afterwards told me that he thought I was dying when he came to see me on the third day.

On the fourth night we arrived at Jaffa, but we had not done with the sea. In olden times Jaffa had a harbour; now the harbour has disappeared, and people have to land in small boats that find their way

between projecting boulders and rocks. We were consequently obliged to remain on board all night, and our ship rolled so much that while we were at supper all the china and glass was smashed. It was a splendid morning when we landed, and we were so attracted by the grandeur of the scene that we did not notice our dangerous position among the rocks. From Jaffa to Jerusalem I rode the greater part of the way on horseback in a temperature of 30 deg. Réaumur, and nearly choked by the dust raised by a caravan of 600 horses and camels in a district where it had not rained for six months. We were escorted by a squadron of natives on horseback. I remarked two very picturesquely dressed men splendidly mounted, and in reply to my questions about them I was told they were the leaders of two bands of robbers with whom a truce had been concluded. This truce must have cost a great deal of money; our pilgrimage to the Holy Land certainly did not diminish the Turkish National Debt. Among the beasts of burthen, I was most interested in the camels. The horizontal position of the head, which is peculiar to the camel, gives him a strange look, between that of a man and a monkey. It is curious to watch the animal when he is being laden. If his burthen is beyond a certain weight he begins to growl and refuse to move. The natives use the stratagem of greatly exceeding the proper weight so as to make the relief appear the greater when they take some of it off, and thereby induce the animal to get up more willingly. 'Exactly,' I ventured to observe to his

Majesty, 'as we do with the Delegations and the war-budget!'

On the evening of the first day we arrived at a place called Abugosh, where we passed the night in an improvised tent. The next day the journey was continued, but we stopped to put on our uniforms in a valley where David is said to have slain Goliah. The procession now assumed a more imposing character. On the spot from which Jerusalem was first visible, the Emperor dismounted in order to kiss the ground, according to an ancient custom. We then made a solemn entry into Jerusalem, I riding at the Emperor's right hand. On reaching the gates we all dismounted, and the Emperor proceeded on foot with his suite to pray at the Holy Sepulchre.

The profound impression made upon me by that momentous day must have been strongly reflected in the telegram I sent to Vienna, as it was well received by many people who had hitherto looked upon the heretic with horror. But I must indeed have been thoughtless and indifferent had I not felt deeply moved at the place whence Christianity and the events it produced took their origin.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to trace Biblical events on the spot. It could not be otherwise than that the certainty of tradition should have been lost after the frequent sieges and destruction of the town. But the locality of Gethsemane and of the Mount of Olives is undisputed, and I was rather pleased than otherwise at not being quartered with the Emperor's military suite in the very comfortable house of the

Austrian Pilgrims, but in a far less comfortable inn standing on an eminence exactly opposite the Mount of Olives.

We found in Jerusalem an excellent guide in the Imperial Consul, Count Caboga, who had studied the Jerusalem of the past and of the present with great zeal. I have a most agreeable recollection of him, and it was my intention to give him a post in my immediate entourage, as I saw that he possessed remarkable talents. Had I remained much longer in office, Count Caboga would have had brilliant opportunities of justifying my high opinion of him. He accompanied me on my excursion to Bethlehem, to which place I went by a perfectly new road on which no carriage had yet passed, and it turned out that I was the first person to drive in a carriage from Jerusalem to Bethlehem since King Solomon. The inhabitants of Bethlehem are of a different and far handsomer type than those of Jerusalem, so that there was naturally but little traffic between the two towns.

I will not leave the Holy City without recording a circumstance by which I was deeply impressed. The Greek-Armenian Church contains treasures in money and jewels to the value of 30,000,000 francs; and this vast property has never been touched by the Mussulman Government, though one cannot say that it did not want money. Would a Christian Government have acted with equal probity? I doubt it.

On leaving Jerusalem I rode on a real horse of the desert, which I bought for the moderate sum of twenty

Napoleons, and which I had in my stables long after 1870. He was rather old, and as my coronation horse was almost past service, I provided for his old age by giving him to one of the Imperial stables.

While on our arrival at Jaffa we had been favoured by the most beautiful weather, on our return the sea was rough and the weather stormy. I arrived with the Ministers Andrassy and Plener long before the Emperor, and we were repeatedly warned of the danger, nay, the impossibility of embarking. An old French pilot was particularly emphatic on the subject, saying; 'Il y'aurait de la folie à laisser l'Empereur s'embarquer par ce temps.' When the Emperor arrived, escorted by Tegetthoff, his Majesty asked the latter whether there was any danger. 'None whatever,' answered Tegetthoff. 'Then let us embark,' said the Emperor. I and others who were present afterwards remarked that Tegetthoff's death was perhaps a fortunate event for his happiness and his fame, as with his reckless audacity he could not always have achieved victories such as that at Lissa.

The Emperor, in order to proceed to his ship, the 'Greif,' entered the boat with Tegetthoff, Prince Hohenlohe, and Count Bellegarde, and we watched them with much anxiety. We suddenly saw the boat rise on a wave and then disappear. I can still hear the words of the old pilot ringing in my ears: 'Il est perdu!'

Fortunately our alarm only lasted for a moment. We saw the boat rise again, and the firing of the guns told us of the Emperor's safe arrival. The boat

returned, but the sailors declared that not for any money would they start again. Thus we could do nothing but wait and pass the night in a monastery. Early in the morning it was announced that the sea was calm, and we hastened to the boat. The sea was still very rough, and I cannot say that we were in a cheerful mood.

Next day we overtook the Emperor at Port Said, where we also found the Empress Eugénie, the Crown Prince of Prussia, and Prince Henry of the Netherlands. At the ceremony of inauguration, on which occasion we had an eloquent speech from the Abbé Bauer, the Emperor escorted the Empress Eugénie.

The most brilliant part of the passage through the canal was the day's stay at Ismailia. It was interesting to see this town of five or six thousand inhabitants which had sprung up in a few years, and still more so the basin, which contained forty vessels, many of them men-of-war, and which ten years before was only an insignificant lake. During the day our only entertainment was the 'Fantasia,' a sort of Oriental tournament, but at night there was a brilliant ball, of which I remember some of the incidents. We were staying on board our ship, and were to be fetched in carriages. The latter, however, either did not appear at all or were very late, and so we were compelled to go to the ball on foot. This was difficult, as Ismailia had at that time no pavement, so that we had to wade through deep sand. I perceived a little black donkey, and without a moment's hesitation I jumped on its back. In this way I passed through

the brilliantly-lighted streets dressed for the ball, and wearing all my decorations; and the Empress Eugénie was much amused when I told her that I had come to the ball on a donkey. The fête was very brilliant, and numerously attended, not only by guests of high rank, but by many of more doubtful position; but this was unavoidable. At supper we found a *menu* with no less than twenty-four courses, which gave us the prospect of a rather unwelcome prolongation of the ball. We were, however, soon pacified, as after the fourth course the supper was at an end. This reminded me of home; the proceeding was only too similar to the introduction in Parliament of numerous bills which are never passed.

As we approached the last portion of the Suez Canal, we had a magnificent view of the desert near Mount Sinai. I have mentioned above our misfortune on the Canal. How it happened that we were obliged to see more than thirty ships pass by us, I do not know; however, it is a fact that although we were among the first to enter the canal, we were the last to reach Suez. At Suez we went through some exciting scenes. Here too we had to disembark in boats, and our Vice-Consul at Suez fell into the water. Fortunately he was a good swimmer, so that neither he nor ourselves felt any worse effects from the accident than fright. I must record in Count Andrassy's praise that hearing of the accident, he took off his coat to swim to the rescue of the Vice-Consul. 'He is a good fellow,' I said to those who tried to prejudice me against him.

It was at Ismailia that I first made the acquaintance of Lesseps, whom I saw ten years later very often in Paris. Though sixty years of age, he had just married a young lady of sixteen, and the marriage turned out a very happy one. He told me that twenty thousand Dalmatians had been employed on the Canal, and that they were the best of all the workmen there. This testimony was of value, considering the frequently unfavourable judgment that is passed on the inhabitants of our Southern Provinces. I have often admired Lesseps' amazing energy; but he was quite wrong in 1882, and he is responsible for much of the mistaken policy of France in Egypt. On returning to Paris early in that year, he spoke enthusiastically of Arabi, whom he had known in former days, and who would, he believed, prove himself a true regenerator,—'l'étoile qui se lève sur la mer Rouge,' as Arabi modestly said of himself. Not knowing Arabi, I could not contradict Lesseps' opinion of him; but I was able to deny that it was a 'mouvement national' that was being set on foot; as I knew Egypt well enough to see that it possesses neither a nation nor a national movement, which must always be an intellectual one to be of any use. As I could see from my interviews with Freycinet, Lesseps was very successful in inculcating his idea of a 'mouvement national dont il ne fallait pas se mêler et en présence duquel la meilleure politique était celle de l'abstention.' Events have proved that he was wrong, and that the movement was merely a military revolt which Arabi turned

to his own advantage. Gambetta would have understood the true state of affairs, and had he lived, he would have sent 30,000 men to Egypt in the month of February before the great heat had set in, and before Arabi had risen to importance. These troops would easily have done what England subsequently did; or, which is more probable, England would have joined them. That France bears Lesseps no grudge for his error does not refute what I have said; it only proves the universal esteem in which that remarkable man is held, and which he so fully deserves.*

* One day I called upon M. de Lesseps in Paris, and the concierge told me he did not know whether he was at home, and sent his wife to inquire. While I was awaiting her return, the concierge said: 'Ah, monsieur! quel homme que M. de Lesseps! Nous aurons bien du mal à le remplacer.'

CHAPTER XXI

1869

CONCLUSION OF THE IMPERIAL JOURNEY TO THE EAST.—CAIRO, ALEXANDRIA, FLORENCE, TRIESTE

After all the dangers of our maritime expedition, it was a great joy to be rapidly carried along in a train, and this feeling was further enhanced by excellent buffets at the various stations. Our comfort in Egypt was carefully attended to, and measures had generally been taken that the multitude of strangers who came to witness the opening of the Canal should have no cause for complaint. But it would have been unwise to think of the National Debt.

I was quartered in most elegant apartments in the magnificent Gesiré Palace, and the Viceroy came himself to see that I was in want of nothing. Ismail Pasha, who had done me the honour of being my guest at Vienna, is far more of a Parisian than an

African, and his manners are most agreeable. I seized the opportunity of urging the just claims of an eminent Austrian physician, Dr Lauter. Other applications for my intervention I found myself unable to satisfy. At that time many complaints were made that various Austrian subjects had not received their due, and the Consul-General, Baron Schreiner, consequently found himself exposed to many misrepresentations. After my return, I entrusted the affair to a committee with legal advisers, and the result was so unfavourable to those who complained, that I took care that the Egyptian Government should not hear anything more of it. Prokesch went too far in his Eastern mania, taking it for granted in every case that the Turks were honest; but it often happens in the East that the bad quality of the wares puts the importer in the wrong; and in this respect our Consuls have often been very unjustly reproached for not having been successful in their efforts on behalf of Austrian subjects.

The scenery of Cairo made a far deeper impression upon me than that of Constantinople, and this may be explained by the fact that it is unique. Constantinople can be compared to Naples or to Lisbon; but the view from the citadel of Cairo is without a parallel in the world. On the one side one sees the old town of the Caliphs, with its monumental tombs, on the other the broad waters of the Nile and the desert with its six pyramids rising on the horizon. I was greatly struck on visiting the citadel with the service in the Mosque. Hymns are sung incessantly at the tomb of

Mehemet Ali, and these hymns are exquisitely beautiful. I must say that the Mahommedan religion had a most imposing effect upon me, so far at least as its external forms are concerned. The fountain playing before the Mosques gives a poetic impression, and still more so the prayer of the worshippers kneeling with their faces towards Mecca: but what most pleased me was the absence of all pictures, figures, and ornaments. I once heard a Mussulman say: 'Il y plus de paganisme dans votre culte que dans le nôtre,' and I do not think that he was quite in the wrong.

The climax of our unfortunately far too short stay in Egypt was our ride to the Pyramids. Early in the morning we went by steamer to Memphis, or rather to the spot where the ancient Memphis stood. Breakfast was to have been taken there; but, owing to some mistake, our refreshments followed instead of preceding us, and were not to be found on our arrival at Memphis. The Emperor, who does not like to waste time, and cares little for eating and drinking, determined not to wait, and we were nearly starved, as during the whole of our ride through the desert till night we had nothing to eat but some eggs boiled in the hot sand. But I did not find the ride fatiguing, as I joined those who preferred donkeys to horses, and the former animal moves by assiduous and yet gentle steps which make one feel as if one were in an arm-chair rolling on wheels. A hyena was captured during this journey. Professor Brugsch Pasha accompanied the Emperor during the whole ride.

I greatly regret that I did not take part in the ascent of the pyramid of Ghizeh. I was dissuaded from doing so, and the ascent cannot be very agreeable, as the traveller is thrown like a trunk from one group of Arabs to another, and they worry him with insatiate demands for baksheesh. I accordingly did not feel much inclined to make a closer acquaintance with the forty centuries. In a former chapter I expressed regret at the unpoetical railways which have deprived us of the real Rigi and the real Vesuvius. I had the same feeling at the end of this excursion to the Pyramids. There is indeed as yet no railway to them, but there is a most comfortable road, by which we returned to Cairo, and a very modern and very prosaic hotel where we enjoyed among other comforts some of Dreher's excellent beer. At six o'clock we were in the train, and I slept all the better on the following night on board the steamer 'Pluto.' I had to leave before the Emperor, who did not start with his suite until the next day. The reason was this: On the occasion of this journey, the Emperor was to have his first meeting with King Victor Emmanuel at Brindisi. The King, however, became dangerously ill, and he had to send his excuses to the Emperor by a telegram addressed to Alexandria. The telegram I sent in reply would, if I could publish it, show the falsity of the assertion so often made in the newspapers, and unfortunately also in the Delegations, that, Austria's friendly relations with Italy did not begin until after my resignation. The Emperor's reply

shows that it was not he, but the King, who gave up the meeting, although he was convalescent when I saw him in Florence shortly afterwards. It will be easily understood that the Emperor could not at that time take the initiative of a visit to Florence. But his Majesty instructed me to proceed home *viâ* Florence, and again to express his regret to the King that the interview had not taken place. I have already mentioned in a former passage how strenuously and successfully I endeavoured to make our relations with Italy assume a friendly aspect. After my resignation the Emperor gave a great, and to my mind an excessive, proof of self-abnegation by returning at Venice the King's visit to Vienna. Suppose Henri V had become King of France in 1873, as he might if he had chosen, and had paid a visit to the Emperor of Germany at Strasburg! The Emperor was indeed not the defeated party at Venice, but that did not lessen the significance of his appearance on territory of which he had been deprived. The injury done to certain estimable feelings is not compensated by the momentary satisfaction of other feelings.

On the evening of our arrival at Alexandria, the Austrian colony gave a very brilliant ball, at which I was present. Nubar Pasha, who has deserved well of Egypt, but who is now condemned, as Lesseps informed me, by the National Party, accompanied me to my steamer. I saw him again in London and in Paris.

The passage to Brindisi, during which I was accom-

panied by Sektionschef von Hofmann, Sektionsrath von Teschenberg, and Hofkonzipist von Vraniczani, was a very calm one, and I was fortunately spared another period of sea-sickness. This journey made up for all the hardships I had undergone. After wandering about among flowers and in summer clothing at Alexandria, I found the Appenines covered with snow, and abominable weather at Florence. Here I had an audience of the King of Italy. Owing to the marriage of Princess Élise with the Duke of Genoa in 1850, when I was Saxon Minister, and her subsequent morganatic marriage, I had entered into indirect communication with the Court of Turin.

The King sent me an aide-de-camp immediately on my arrival. The audience was fixed for the afternoon, and I was requested to come in my overcoat. I took the liberty, however, of appearing in a court suit and a white tie. Although I had been asked to appear in an overcoat, the guards and officials were in uniform.

The King wore an old jacket, and had a hat under his arm. His erect military attitude gave him an imposing appearance, and his manner was very dignified, though his language was occasionally coarse.* The following words which he said to me give another proof that the good understanding with Italy was not delayed until after my resignation : 'Après ce que

* Thus he said, speaking of his illness : 'J'ai pensé que je crêverais, et cela me faisait plaisir.' He could not, however, have been in earnest ; as I heard that even in the worst moments of his illness he was able to continue the correspondence he was then carrying on with Pope Pius IX.

l' Empereur a fait, il peut disposer de ma personne, de ma vie. Je lui donne cinq cent mille hommes le jour où il les voudra.' There was, I think, less cause to doubt the sincerity of his words, than the existence of those five hundred thousand men. He also said, with a dash of that Italian bombast which was characteristic of him: 'La nation écoute quand je parle,' which reminded me of Andrew Doria's saying that the sea listened when he spoke. In both cases the exaggeration had some foundation in truth.

I had on this occasion another audience which might have produced decisive results. The Dowager Duchess of Genoa, who usually resided at Turin, was then at Florence, and of course I paid her a visit. She is a princess of great accomplishments and quick intelligence. The candidature of her son, Prince Tomaso, who was then a minor, for the Spanish throne, was the subject of our conversation. Nobody dreamed in those days of a Bourbon Restoration in Spain. But the Duchess of Genoa was strongly against her son's candidature. She feared he might share the fate of the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico; I was of opinion, however, that there was not the remotest analogy between the two cases. In Spain the candidate for the throne would not receive the damaging support of a foreign patron, as was the case in Mexico; and I ventured to add, knowing the Duchess's personal views, that scruples of legitimacy would not be of decisive weight with an Italian Prince and the King of Italy. I took the liberty of pointing out in particular that the election

of a foreign Prince to a vacant throne would have the best chance of success if the Prince were a minor, as in that event all responsibility, and therefore all discontent, would be kept aloof from him, and would fall on the Regency, so that he would have plenty of time to gain the sympathies of his subjects. As an instance of this I mentioned King Otto of Greece, who had indeed to abdicate, but not until after he had reigned for over thirty years. Had my advice been followed, the following year would not have seen a Hohenzollern candidature nor a Franco-German War.

In Trieste, where I reported to the Emperor the result of my Florentine mission, I learned some news which greatly shocked me, but which soon proved not to be so bad as I at first feared. My son, during the year in which he served as a volunteer in the Army, was attacked by a nervous fever, which kept him for weeks lying between life and death. His life was saved only by the admirable skill of Dr Standhardtner and the devoted nursing of his mother. The news of his illness had been kept secret from me, which was a great mercy, as if I had heard it in Palestine or Egypt, I could not have returned, and would have suffered extreme anxiety. I fortunately received at Trieste a letter from the doctor which set my mind quite at ease.

In Trieste I saw Count Taaffe; his reports and those of the Governor General Möring as to the state of things in Vienna were anything but favourable.

CHAPTER XXII

1869

THE BEGINNING OF TROUBLES.—THE CIS-LEITHAN MINISTERIAL CRISIS.

Soon after the Emperor's return from his Eastern journey, a crisis in the cis-Leithan Ministry, which had long been latent, burst forth with great violence.

Many erroneous notions have been circulated with regard to this crisis, its origin, and its development. As I said in a former passage, Taaffe and Potocki, as well as myself, were thoroughly honest and sincere in desiring the efficiency and permanence of the 'Bürgerministerium,' and we never dreamed of carrying on secret intrigues to bring about its collapse.

The chief cause of dissension was not to be found in

the hostility of the two aristocratic Ministers towards their Bourgeois colleagues, but in the want of unity of the latter among themselves, as illustrated by the celebrated saying of Berger when someone complained that the Ministers did not sufficiently support each other: 'Wie sollen wir denn für einander einstehen, wenn wir einander nicht ausstehen können?' (How can we support each other, if we cannot bear each other?) There may not have been any discord between Herbst, Hasner, Brestl and Plener; and Giskra stood by them, though not quite the man to suit them. Berger, however, soon assumed an independent tone which produced a coolness in their personal relations. I shall never forget a most painful scene that took place in my room. Giskra was talking to me, when Berger entered, and on Giskra advancing to shake hands with him, Berger put his hand in his pocket. Under such circumstances it was not to be wondered at that the Ministers willingly listened to mischief-makers, who are more numerous in Vienna than elsewhere. Moreover, Berger had the fault of not being able to control his caustic temper. When there was a meeting of the Cabinet, he used to make critical remarks, not very flattering to his colleagues, on strips of paper, which he passed to Count Taaffe, who read them with a smile, and then tore them up and threw them under the table. I happen to know that one of the Ministers often remained in the room after the others had left, and carefully collected all the strips on which these remarks were written.

The name of Berger is associated in my mind with a series of mishaps.

Soon after the formation of the Auersperg Ministry, it was arranged that Berger should confer with me every morning. The object of these conferences was to discuss the more important statements of the newspapers of the day, and to consult as to the articles to be published in the 'inspired' journals. It was a great pleasure to me on these occasions to perceive the uncommon acuteness of his mind, while on the other hand, my experiences of all phases of public life, extending over many years, could not fail to be welcome to him.

I need hardly contradict the statement that I took the opportunity afforded me by these conferences of alienating Berger from his colleagues. He agreed with my view of the Bohemian question, and with my conviction of the necessity of timely and moderate concessions; but this conviction was spontaneous in him, and not the result of any persuasion on my part. Even on other subjects we always agreed. Unfortunately he became stone deaf, so that it was only possible to communicate with him by writing. This happened soon after his resignation in 1870.

Had Berger's health not broken down, he would have become the man of the situation, not at the time of the crisis itself, but on the resignation of the Hasner Ministry.

The reconstruction of the Ministry was effected with much difficulty. Hasner became Minister-President, and gave up the Ministry of Public

Instruction to Herr von Stremayr; Dr Banhans replaced Potocki as Minister of Agriculture; and General Baron Wagner took the place of Taaffe as Minister of National Defence.

My relations towards the modified Ministry, which only lasted a few months, were not unfriendly on the whole. As a proof that I undertook nothing against the Ministry, but was always ready to help it, I may state that on being asked for my opinion, I urged the Emperor to sanction the new electoral law. The existing law, according to which direct election* had to take place whenever any Diet refused to send members to the Reichsrath, was completed by the enactment that direct elections should also take place when Members of the Diet who had already entered the Reichsrath gave up their seats in it. I have never been able to understand why the Hasner Ministry did not make use of this expedient at the right time. The members for Galicia, Bukovina, and the Slovene districts, left the Reichsrath without my knowledge or participation. Grocholski, the leader of the Poles, came to me and said: 'I hear that your Excellency regrets our exit.' 'I do,' I replied; 'not only for myself, but still more for you. The Ministry need only apply the newly-sanctioned electoral law.' Instead of doing this, the Ministry hit upon the inexplicable idea, which I opposed, of only dissolving the Galician Diet. Hasner went with this proposal to Buda, whither I too was summoned.

* *i.e.*, elections of members of the Reichsrath by the constituencies, instead of in the usual manner by the Diets.

A very important opinion, that of Count Andrassy, was expressed at Buda against the dissolution of the Galician Diet. The Emperor rejected the proposal, and Hasner sent in his resignation and that of all the other Ministers.

CHAPTER XXIII

1870

THE POTOCKI MINISTRY.—THE FIRST HARBINGERS OF A STORM IN THE WEST.

I SPOKE in the last chapter of my misadventure with Berger; I come now to another unfortunate experience with Potocki. In the former case the man of the situation suddenly became incapable of work; in the latter, the individual who I thought was the man of the situation, proved not to be so.

When I came to Vienna, Count Alfred Potocki was not a new acquaintance. Twenty years previously we were both in London, I as Resident Minister of Saxony, he as Attaché to his brother-in-law, Count Maurice Dietrichstein. I was struck by his distinguished manners and by his liberal views, which were broader than those generally held by men of his rank, and I cannot better describe the impression which he

made upon me than by saying that he was an Austrian Whig. Such a man, possessing a large fortune and vast estates, seemed to me just the person I wanted. He was connected with aristocratic and ecclesiastical circles, and yet he was neither reactionary nor bigoted. My interviews with him led me to believe that he possessed firmness and perseverance, but I was cruelly deceived in this belief.

I do not mean to reproach Count Potocki, as he was totally devoid of ambition, and only decided on assuming the Presidency of the Ministry because his patriotism was appealed to; but I cannot conceal facts which had serious consequences.

My first disenchantment arose during the formation of the Cabinet. Those who were applied to were not at first disinclined to enter the Ministry, and even Dr Rechbauer, when I fell ill some months later at Gratz, told me that he regretted his refusal. But they were discouraged by Potocki. This phenomenon of a Minister who, in forming a Cabinet, prevents the nominees from taking office, can only be explained by an estimable, but reprehensible, because mistaken, conscientiousness. I was a witness of the abortive negotiation with the most important of the nominees, the Governor of Northern Austria, Count Hohenwart, who was then very different from what he became in 1871. He was known as one of the best of the higher officials of the Administration, and Giskra himself gave him the character of an excellent man of business, thoroughly to be relied upon. The Ministry would have gained much by his support, as he afterwards

proved a skilful debater in Parliament. He declared his readiness to take office, but to my surprise Count Potocki prevented his appointment. During their conversation they discussed the question of direct elections from a purely academical point of view, and Count Hohenwart opposed the system of direct election on the ground that it was an infringement of the rights of the Diet—an opinion which Herbst himself had once defended. Although the introduction of direct elections was not looked upon by Count Potocki or by myself as a *noli me tangere*, and there was no present idea of bringing in such a measure, Count Potocki thought it necessary to point out to Count Hohenwart that he had expressed an opinion on this question with which he did not agree, and there the negotiation ended.

What especially dissatisfied me in Count Potocki was that he made an unnecessary display of his want of confidence in himself. Almost every Council of Ministers held in the presence of the Emperor, was opened by Count Potocki with the words: 'It must be owned that the state of affairs is very serious.' 'How can the Emperor have confidence in us,' I asked him, 'if he hears of nothing but of a serious state of affairs?'

Had Count Potocki assumed a more decided attitude, he would certainly have been requested to remain in office, and he might easily have constructed an efficient Ministry had he retained the direction of affairs after the resignation of Taaffe, Widmann and Petrino. He would have found more than one

member of the Constitutional Party ready to serve under him.

The Emperor had to give him up because he gave himself up. During that year, his Majesty clearly proved that he intended to support me as his Premier. The honorary post of Chancellor of the Order of Maria Theresa, which had first been held by Prince Kaunitz and afterwards by Prince Metternich until his death, had been vacant for several years since the death of Field-Marshal Count Wratislaw. At the moment when I saw myself attacked on every side, the Emperor appointed me to this post—a magnanimous decision, calculated to sustain my courage in those days of countless trials and difficulties.

Soon after events occurred which tested my courage more than ever. The unexpected conflict between France and Germany broke out. I say, 'unexpected,' because I would rather be reproached, although unjustly, for not having foreseen the Franco-German War, than give grounds for the insinuation that has been made that I brought about the fall of the Hasner Ministry in view of the war.

Before going into details of the history of that epoch so far as Austria-Hungary was concerned, I must lay before the reader an extract from a despatch which I wrote on the subject on the 28th of April, 1874. This despatch was placed at my disposal in 1880 by Baron Haymerle. I then found under the closing sentence the following words in the Emperor's handwriting: 'Ist wahr' (True).

To Count Andrassy, Vienna.

London, *April* 28, 1874.

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In the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs there must be a despatch to Prince Metternich, dating from the period of the Luxemburg difficulty in the spring of 1867, in which an answer is given to a despatch communicated to the Duc de Gramont. The latter proposed to us an alliance with the offer of territorial annexations in South Germany or Silesia. I replied by pointing out that the Emperor, having ten millions of German subjects, could not make an alliance for the purpose of diminishing German territory. I cannot recollect whether I repeated in this despatch the idea which I have repeatedly expressed to the Duc de Gramont, and to which he alludes in his answer of January 1873, but I remember the idea itself very distinctly. It could not be our task to attack Germany, any more than it was our duty to protect her. The field of action to which our interests pointed, and where all the races in the empire could fight without aversion, was the East. An understanding with Russia had been attempted in 1867 by a revision of the Treaty of Paris; but in consequence of the French Cabinet not having appreciated it, it fell through, and the Panslavist movement which was then going on made Russia daily more unfriendly to Austria. The situation had become such that we looked upon Russia in the East as our adversary, and we were consequently obliged to strive to go hand in

hand with France if she opposed Prussia in that quarter. Owing to the passive attitude of England, this might in certain circumstances have led to a conflict of Austria and France with Russia; and if Prussia had happened to side with Russia, we would have been able to take part in a war of France against Germany without any internal difficulties. The Emperor Napoleon was never able to understand this, and he always entertained the incredible delusion that he could sever Russia from Prussia. This fatal idea can be traced in the correspondence of Prince Metternich up to July 1870.

* * * * * * *

It was during my stay at Gastein in July 1868 that I received from Prince Metternich some very obscure hints as to proposals from the Emperor Napoleon. As our Ambassador was about to go on leave to Johannisberg, I induced him to give me a rendezvous at Salzburg, where he fully developed to me the Emperor's idea, which was that we should join in sending a sort of interpellation to Prussia on her attempts to encroach on the line of the Main. (This is perhaps the origin of the constantly recurring assertion that it was intended to send Prussia an ultimatum in 1870 relative to the maintenance of the Peace of Prague). I did not find it difficult to prove, in a memorandum which must be in the Archives, that such a proposal would afford the best means of raising up a feeling in South Germany in favour of encroachments on the line of the Main. But I made another proposal to the Emperor

Napoleon. I suggested that he should issue a manifesto in some form or other to the following effect: 'He—the Emperor Napoleon—had sincerely accepted, and even participated in, the Peace of Prague, although it was opposed to all traditional French interests. He was just giving a new and improved organisation to his army. (We must bear in mind that Marshal Niel was still alive). It was obviously the interest and the desire of the nations of Europe to obtain a reduction of their military burthens. He himself would gladly set the example of disarmament, as soon as he should be enabled to do so by a satisfactory explanation on the part of the Prussian Government as to the maintenance of the provisions of the Peace of Prague.' With such a manifesto, which could easily have been drawn up in the most advantageous diplomatic form, the Emperor Napoleon would have acquired an excellent position in France as well as in Europe, and he would have forced upon the Prussian Government the alternative either of giving an explanation which it could not and would not give, or of facing an agitation against the military Budget. No notice was taken of my advice, and the Emperor Napoleon thought himself wiser when he said: 'Avec le système de la Landwehr, c'était faire un marché de dupe.' Soon afterwards the first attempts were made towards the 'échange d'idées et de mémoires' on a Franco-Austro-Italian Alliance. These pourparlers extended over a year, and found their conclusion in the Imperial letters of September 1869. In these pourparlers, Rouher on one side, and I on

the other, were the interlocutors ; Prince Metternich, Count Vitzthum, and Count Vimercati were the intermediaries ; while at the Emperor's express wish, the Duc de Gramont was kept in ignorance of what was going on, and the Marquis Lavalette and the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne were only initiated at the last moment.

The correspondence lies before your Excellency, and I only make these few remarks to show why and how I entered on the above negotiations, and on what our attention was most fixed during their progress.

The pourparlers in question did not originally have any prospect of a positive result, as there was no tangible object of alliance ; but they were negatively of great use. We had to consider a double danger when reflecting on the notorious character and training of the Emperor Napoleon : his coming to an agreement with Prussia at our cost, or his suddenly declaring war upon Prussia to our disadvantage. How greatly the former apprehension was based on fact, is proved by the negotiations which were revealed later on about Belgium ; and the latter was realised to the fullest extent by the war of 1870. The first danger was removed by Napoleon's letter, but not the second, which however, would have been removed if the proposed agreement to the effect that in all questions Austria and France should diplomatically act in common had been ratified. It is certainly no exaggeration to maintain that in that case we should have made the war of 1870 an impossibility.

There is perhaps no stronger proof that France contemplated war even in 1869, than the fact that Napoleon himself broke off the negotiations by his letter, which left him perfect liberty to declare war; while the intended agreement would have restricted him in this respect, although Austria would at the same time have been able to declare herself neutral. No other agreement was in truth made than the renunciation, contained in the Imperial letters, of any negotiations with third parties. A draft was at the same time prepared of a declaration to be signed by the three sovereigns: they did not however, sign it.

Then came the Hohenzollern conflict. In vain did we, like other Powers, attempt to reconcile Paris, Berlin, and Madrid. There are telegrams and despatches to prove how urgently we endeavoured to dissuade the French Cabinet from war. I wrote private letters in which I in vain advised France to refrain from any steps against Prussia, and only to direct her energies against Spain and the Pretender, leaving Prussia alone unless she should take the initiative of interference; in vain did I urge upon her the advisability of treating the withdrawal of the Prince's candidature as a diplomatic victory. The Duc de Gramont has not been able to prove, and will never be able to prove, that a single word was ever uttered or written before the declaration of war to lead France to believe that she could rely on the armed support of Austria.

When war was once declared, it is true that friendly letters, but no binding promises, were sent to

Paris. It would have been of no use to France, and it might have been very injurious to us, to discourage her. It is easy to contradict this now; but no one could have done so then. It should be remembered that the Prussian Government itself was anxious to prepare the public mind in the newspapers for the possibility of a few defeats at first. We knew that the Emperor Napoleon was inclined to make peace as soon as possible; and it is certain that this would have been effected at our cost, for under the existing circumstances the annexation by Prussia of South Germany would in itself have constituted a defeat for Austria; and what words would have been strong enough to blame the Austrian Minister who should have failed to foresee this result? I am not disposed to deny that the great rapidity of events, and the consequent excitement of the writers of some of the letters sent from Vienna to Paris, caused some expressions to be employed that had not been sufficiently weighed;* but it is on words only, and not on thoughts and actions, that Gramont's delusion and the attacks of the newspapers are based. I have no hesitation in saying that Gramont's whole conduct in this matter was based on a delusion, for he can never allege, much less prove, the only fact that could excuse him—that he was in possession of an alliance before the declaration of war; and the conviction, which he says he derived from subsequent communications, that he could reckon

* In this category may be placed the often quoted words: 'fidèles à nos engagements,' by which was meant the promise, contained in the two Imperial letters, of not entering into negotiations with a third Power.

on Austria's armed intervention, only lays him open to the further reproach that under such circumstances he could not succeed in forming an alliance. Accept etc.

BEUST.

CHAPTER XXIV

1870-1871

THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR.—THE ATTITUDE OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY WITH REGARD TO IT.

A ONE-SIDED and superficial point of view has too often been maintained in newspapers and historical works in treating of the action of Austria-Hungary with regard to the Franco-German War. I will say nothing of the attacks made upon myself, except that during the year 1871, when the friendly despatch we received from Germany received an equally friendly answer, and this cordial correspondence was demonstratively emphasized by the Imperial meetings at Salzburg and Gastein, my enemies were silent, and that they only began to attack me when I ceased to be Premier. Even when hostility or prejudice, either against my person or my policy, did not manifest itself, unfavour-

able criticisms were almost always connected with isolated remarks in the so-called revelations of the Duc de Gramont.

But such judgments are always defective and precipitate. Every man who rises above mere party feeling will agree with me in maintaining that the attitude which a Power assumes towards a war which has broken out between two other Powers, and whose immediate object does not affect its interests (which obviously could not be the case as regards Austria when the question at issue was a candidature for the Spanish throne) must necessarily be influenced by the previous relations which it had maintained with those Powers. It cannot be repeated too often that between France and ourselves there was no agreement hostile to Prussia, and that we never dreamed of attacking Prussia. But, on the other hand, I have often reminded the reader in the course of this work that Prussia had nothing to offer us in Germany, and that because of her position towards Russia we had nothing to hope from her in the East, while the support of France was essential to us in that quarter. That Russian aggression was imminent, independently of the Nationalist agitations which were going on between the Adriatic and the Black Sea, has been proved by events. Prince Gortschakoff, who became the deadly enemy of Austria from the time of his mission to Vienna, and whose enmity was not diminished during my Administration, as I must candidly confess, never gave up the hope of gratifying

his grudge against Austria. It was a significant circumstance that he received with the greatest coldness the offer made to him from Vienna in 1867 of revoking the limitation imposed upon Russia in the Black Sea. He preferred to gain this advantage by lawlessly breaking an existing treaty. This was certainly only a first step, preliminary to a second in the direction of the mouths of the Danube.

Under such circumstances Austria could not possibly have shown coldness to France when the Hohenzollern dispute broke out. Moreover, it was a question which party was the aggressor. No one thinks so now, but early in 1870 an unprejudiced judgment could only have been unfavourable to Prussia.

Could Prussia, could Germany, have any conceivable interest in the occupation of the Spanish Throne by a German Prince? In Germany neither material advantages nor national aspirations could be concerned in such a question. But in France the case was very different. There Spain and the Spanish Crown were traditionally a 'corde sensible.' After Louis the Fourteenth's War of the Spanish Succession, and his words 'Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées,' Napoleon exhausted his army in the Peninsular War, and Louis Philippe made the Spanish Marriages. In Berlin all this could not have been overlooked; and when conferring with Prim, the Prussian Cabinet must have known that only one explanation of its interference was possible—either that it was indifferent

to the national feeling of France, or that it wished to provide for the eventuality of a war with France by securing an ally to attack her in the rear. In either case there was provocation ; and Prussia acknowledged this view, though somewhat tardily, by bringing about the renunciation of Prince Leopold.

France afterwards put herself in the wrong by the demand she addressed to King William and by the declaration of war. But at first the sympathies of Europe were far more with France than with Prussia.

It is idle to raise a discussion as to which party wished for war. The idea was that France wished for war without being prepared for it, and that Prussia was prepared for war without wishing for it. There is no doubt that the preparations of France were very defective ; and it was generally believed that Napoleon wished to reserve war as his last card. As stated in the despatch quoted in the last chapter, he broke off negotiations with us because he was hampered by the 'action diplomatique commune ;' but in 1870 he was by no means decided for war, and he would have avoided it, could he have allayed the violent but deceptive popular *élan* instead of being carried along by it. That Prussia wished to avoid war could only have been taken for granted had she from the first declared herself against the Hohenzollern candidature.

Under these circumstances it was natural that the attitude of Austria-Hungary towards the Franco-Prussian conflict should not have been originally hostile to France.

In Berlin as well as in Madrid, we made the utmost exertions to obtain the withdrawal of the Hohenzollern candidature. But if our attitude was friendly to France, our language was not such as to incite her to war. The best proof of this will be found in the despatch published in 1873 * on the occasion of my correspondence with the Duc de Gramont.

It was originally intended to include that despatch in the Red Book which was laid before the Delegations in 1870, when they met at Pesth. A very natural feeling led me to withdraw it at the last moment. France, defeated again and again, was then making her last efforts to beat back her enemy, and was nobly enduring the siege of Paris. The publication of the despatch at that moment would have been of the greatest value to Austria-Hungary, and especially to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; but would it have been chivalrous, would it have been right, would it even have been compatible with strict neutrality, thus to come forward with an accusation against the vanquished, and with a justification for the victor?

I have indeed paid heavily for that act of generosity. If the despatch had appeared in the Red Book at the end of 1870, all the French papers, with the exception of the Bonapartist press, which was then silent, would have reprinted it, and the Duc de Gramont would not have dared in 1873 to come forward as he did, for that despatch would have been

* Appendix C.

remembered by the French nation. That Prince Metternich should have taken no notice of the despatch of the 11th of July is clearly proved to be impossible by a private letter which I wrote to him on the same day, and which I here reproduce in its entirety :—

Au Prince Metternich, à Paris.

Vienne, *le* 11 *Juillet*, '70.

Mon cher ami,—En observant ce qui se fait autour de Vous je me demande si je suis devenu imbécile que cela me passe.

Je me fais cependant l'effet d'avoir ma tête à moi. Examinons donc les choses de sang-froid et arrêtons-nous à deux considérations.

Parlons d'abord de notre co-opération.

Gramont ayant à ce qu'il paraît étudié notre dossier secret, parle de certaines stipulations comme si elles avaient passé de l'état de projet à l'état de traité. D'abord elles sont restées à l'état de projet ; et il n'y a pas de notre faute si telle est la situation. Mais lors-même qu'elles auraient force de traité, quelle singulière application on s'imagine pouvoir en faire ! On était convenu—toujours à l'état de projet —de s'entendre partout et toujours sur une action diplomatique commune. Aujourd'hui sans nous consulter, sans seulement nous prévenir, sans crier gare, on va hardiment en avant, pose et resout la question de guerre à propos d'une question qui ne nous regarde en aucune façon, et présume, comme une chose qui

s'entend, qu'il nous suffit d'en être informé pour que nous mettions notre armée sur le pied de guerre et réunissions un corps d'armée assez considérable pour paralyser l'armée prussienne.

Et à l'heure qu'il est on ne nous a pas seulement dit où et comment l'armée française compte opérer.

Ensuite on nous parle du bon terrain où l'on se serait placé en abordant la question de guerre dans une question qui ne saurait intéresser ni exciter la nation allemande.

J'ai été le premier à le reconnaître au débût de la discussion. Mais je vois avec un profond regret qu'à Paris on fait son possible pour changer ce bon terrain en un très-mauvais terrain, et qu'on va tout droit à mettre contre soi l'esprit public en Allemagne aussi bien qu'en Espagne.

Je Vous l'ai déjà dit, il fallait selon moi s'attaquer à la candidature Hohenzollern, mais pas à la Prusse. Et si on voulait absolûment exiger au roi Guillaume qu'il renonce à la candidature du Prince Léopold et qu'il l'empêche, il fallait user de tels procédés qui l'eussent mis dans son tort en cas de refus vis-à-vis de l'Europe et de l'Allemagne en particulier.

Assurément l'Allemagne toute entière ne comprendra pas qu'elle dût se battre pour la Prusse voulant à toute force introniser un prince en Espagne; mais elle défendra ses frontières si on l'attaque, et elle comprendra tout aussi peu qu'une puissance étrangère soit dans la nécessité de lui faire la guerre, parceque le Roi Chef de la Confédération du Nord sous le coup de menaces

refuse d'y eéder, et abandnone aux Cortés espagnols de s'arranger eomme elles voudront.

Il est possible que je me trompe dans mes appréciations. Peutêtre réussira-t-on par la pression soutenue par les autres puissances, je ne demande pas mieux. Vous savez que nous aussi nous y apportons notre eontingent. Mais si on n'y réussit pas, qu'on ne nous rende pas solidaires de toutes les mauvaises chanees que je signale et qu'on fait naître. Mille amitiés.

BEUST.

I shall revert later on to my eorrespondence with the Due de Gramont.* I have introdueed the above letter here beeause this was rendered neeessary by the mention of the despateh of the 11th of July.

I was indueed to use the very decided language of that despateh by the importunities of the Freneh Chargé d'Affaires, who said to me onee when annoyed by my retieence: 'Vous me faites l'effet de gens qui perdent leur argent à petit jeu.' To this I eould not help answering: 'Si c'est notre argent que nous perdons, e'est nous seuls que eela regarde.' But my adviee to Franee was not eontained in that despateh alone. As soon as the renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern was made known, I sent a detailed telegram to Prinee Metternich, in whieh I strongly urged that Franee would aet wisely in eontenting herself with her diplomatie vietory, and with making effeetual use of it. The Duc de Gramont, who

* See Appendix D.

was in England when I was appointed Ambassador in London in 1871, remembered that circumstance very well, and he said that he fully realised the value of my advice, but that the Emperor Napoleon was of a different opinion. He (Gramont) was against war; but Marshal Lebœuf flew into a violent passion at the council when his colleagues dared to doubt of victory. He even threw his portfolio on the ground, swearing he would resign if war was not declared at once.*

Gramont was at that time in the best of humours,† and he spontaneously declared that neither he nor his country had any reason to find fault with us. He quoted what he said to Napoleon at Metz after the first victories of the Crown Prince, when the Emperor spoke of the assistance of Austria: 'Sire, est-ce qu'on s'allie à un battu?' These were his own words, from which we may draw the conclusion: 'qu'on ne s'était pas allié à l'Autriche avant d'être battu.'

* In his recently published Memoirs, Lord Malmesbury gives an account of an interview which he had after the war with Gramont, in which the Duke said that Napoleon was ready to accept the renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern, but that war was advocated by his Ministers—of whom the Minister of Foreign Affairs must have been on such an occasion the chief. It is possible that the vivacity of the Duc de Gramont's imagination, of which I have seen many instances, led him to give two different accounts of the same occurrence; but one cannot fail to perceive how highly improbable it is that Gramont should voluntarily have declared himself responsible for the measure that brought so many disasters on his country. I must further remark that I made a note of what Gramont said to me, and that I was much more interested in the matter than Lord Malmesbury.

† It is strange how things repeat themselves. At the end of the Italian War in 1869, I went to Vienna, where I met Count Buol. He too was in excellent spirits. 'What would you have me do?' he said, 'I was against war, but if all our generals say that we are invincible, how can I prevent them from saying so?' I must do Count Buol the justice of admitting that the Italian War would not have taken place had his views been followed; nor was he unfavourable to the Prussian Ministry of the new era which succeeded that of Manteuffel; on the contrary, his policy towards it was very conciliatory.

Prince Napoleon, who never forgave me his *déconvenue matrimoniale* in Dresden, although I was perfectly innocent of it, published an article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in 1878, in which he tried to prove that I was not an *esprit sérieux* by reminding his readers that I jokingly proposed to the French Government before the declaration of war to make a prisoner of the Prince of Hohenzollern. The following are the facts of the case :

The Emperor Napoleon had up to the last an implicit belief in the help of Russia, and he also indulged in the illusion, of which it was impossible to disabuse him, that South Germany would not take part in the war. How strenuously I endeavoured to cure him of this notion is proved by a report published in an English Blue Book, which was sent to his Government by Lord Bloomfield, then English Ambassador at Vienna. It was at that time that I wrote these lines to Prince Metternich on a scrap of paper :

'Gramont veut-il ma recette ? La voici : ne pas s' attaquer au Roi de Prusse, traiter la question en question espagnole, et si à Madrid on ne tient pas compte des réclamations et envoie la flotille qui doit prendre le Prince de Hohenzollern dans un port de la mer du Nord, faire sortir un escadre de Brest ou de Cherbourg pour l'empoigner. Si la Prusse se fâche pour cela, elle aura de la peine à faire marcher le Midi ; si au contraire vous vous attaquez à elle, le Midi lui appartient.'

Prince Metternich showed these lines to the Duc

de Gramont, who replied: 'M. de Beust m'envoie une scène d'opéra comique.'

We must bear in mind that these lines were neither in a despatch nor a *lettre diplomatique confidentielle*, but merely a note on a loose sheet of paper; therefore such expressions as 'empoigner' must not be taken literally. But the idea was, as I then thought, and still think, perfectly sound. Émile Ollivier, to whom I spoke on the subject when he paid me a visit, was of a different opinion, and maintained that my suggestion would have involved Spain in the war. But the answer to this is that so decided an attitude on the part of France, culminating in a naval demonstration, would have made it as difficult for Spain to reply with a declaration of war, as for Prussia to call the German nation to arms because of a Franco-Spanish dispute concerning the private affairs of a Prince who did not even belong to the reigning dynasty. The danger of war would then have become so obvious, that it is certain strenuous attempts at mediation would have been made in all quarters.

The historian Henri Martin was fully justified in saying at the farewell dinner given to me by the *Association Littéraire Internationale* in 1882: 'Ayant consulté tous les documents relatifs à l'époque, je tiens à constater que, si en 1870 on avait suivi les conseils du Comte de Beust, tous nos désastres nous eussent été épargnés.'

Perhaps we shall never ascertain the real origin

of the declaration of war which was so fatal to France. The Italian Ambassador in Paris, Chevalier Nigra, one of the best authorities on the events of those days, told me that he was at St. Cloud on the 14th of July, and that Napoleon showed him a message to be sent on the following day to the Corps Législatif whose tenour was absolutely pacific. Yet the following day brought the declaration of war. This unexpected turn of affairs is explained by the news of the insult offered to the French Ambassador, Count Benedetti, at Ems, by the refusal of an audience. But France has always asserted that the telegram containing that news was a trap laid by Count Bismarck, into which the French were only too eager to fall. According to what I heard in Paris, which agrees with what the Emperor of Germany told me himself at Gastein in 1871, Count Benedetti was not insulted; he was at the station when the King was leaving, while if he had been insulted he would certainly have remained at home; the despatch announcing the alleged insult was not sent by him, but from Munich and Stuttgart; and the French Cabinet fell into the wildest state of excitement, and allowed others to follow its example, *without making enquiries of Benedetti as to the truth of the rumour*. Finally, (this may seem almost to transcend all belief, but my investigations place the matter beyond a doubt) I was assured that the French Cabinet had no secret design, but acted in perfect good faith and with unexampled precipitation.

CHAPTER XXV

1870

RECOLLECTIONS OF 1870 IN 1873.—THIERS AND GRAMONT.

The reader may remember that as soon as the Government of National Defence was formed, M. Thiers made a tour in Europe to induce the Governments of the Great Powers to take the part of his afflicted country. After having been in London, and before proceeding to St Petersburg, he visited Vienna, to which city he returned on his way from the Russian capital to Florence.

M. Thiers was not personally unknown to me. I had been introduced to him as Secretary of Legation to the Saxon Embassy by Count Walewski in 1839, on which occasion, as I vividly remember, I heard this witty and acute partisan of political progress expressing the most retrograde views on political

economy. It is well known that he remained to the day of his death an inveterate enemy of Free Trade; and Michel Chevalier told me in London that it was this hostility to Free Trade that brought about his fall on the 24th of May 1873, when the group of Free Traders voted in a body against him. In 1839 I heard him maintain quite seriously that railways were the most useless things in the world.

Thirty years had elapsed since then, and I naturally remembered him better than he did me. Our meeting at Vienna, however, resulted in a real friendship. I saw him later on when I was staying at Paris and Versailles on my way to London, and he showed me every possible courtesy. I had the more reason to regret his death, as on being removed from London to Paris I would in all probability, if he had lived till then, have found him President for the second time of the French Republic.

It was very natural that as I was unable in 1870 to hold out to him any prospect of material assistance, I was all the more desirous of giving him a cordial reception. He accepted with touching gratitude the only assistance which I could offer him, and which I honestly, though fruitlessly, endeavoured to obtain: the collective mediation of the Neutral Powers. On one point he agreed with the sovereign to whom he was so greatly opposed—that salvation would come from Russia. Even on his return from St Petersburg he was not cured of this idea. He had a most flattering reception from the Czar as well as from

Prince Gortschakoff, but he was only too quickly disenchanted by the publication of the agreement concluded a long time previously between Count Bismarck and Prince Gortschakoff on the subject of the Treaty of Paris. On his second visit to Vienna, he dined with me, and as we entered into more intimate conversation after dinner, I said to him: 'M. Thiers, vous allez à Florence; on aura pour vous des belles paroles, mais rien de plus, je vous en préviens;' to which Thiers gave the charming answer: 'Oh, je ne suis pas gâté.'

Thiers bore his full share of the ingratitude inherent in human nature in general, and in the present age in particular. It was he who saved Belfort to France, and obtained the early evacuation of French territory. Though the country yearned for peace, the negotiation of the preliminaries was a difficult and painful task. Thiers has never been sufficiently thanked for having undertaken and completed that task as he did; and my interviews with Prince Bismarck at Gastein in 1871 confirmed me in the opinion I long entertained, that it is not saying too much to declare that perhaps no one else could have succeeded in bringing the German Chancellor to reasonable terms in so short a time. I have often heard people say that Thiers deceived the Monarchical majority of the Assembly, as it did not place him at the head of the State for the purpose of definitively installing a Republic; but they forget that it was only by promising the maintenance of the Republic

that Thiers could keep the moderate and prudent Republicans from the Commune. He remarked to me at Vienna: 'Personellement j'aimerais mieux la Monarchie Anglaise, mais elle est impossible.' His saying: 'La République sera conservatrice, ou elle ne sera pas,' has been only too fully realised. Not so his other saying: 'La République est la forme de gouvernement qui nous divise le moins.'

His great misfortune was that he overrated his powers, and unwisely showed that he did so. The same was the case with Gambetta nine years later. He thought himself omnipotent in the Chamber, and showed that he thought so by the untimely introduction of the *scrutin de liste*. I saw Thiers in February 1873, three months before his fall. 'L'Assemblée,' he said 'fait quelquefois mine d'être récalcitrante, mais je n'ai qu'à' faire ceci, and he raised his finger. Other people may have heard this who were more dangerous than I. In consequence of his exaggerated notions as to the extent of his power, Thiers made a decided blunder in not treating the vote of the 24th of May in the manner prescribed by the Constitution, and in resigning, with the full conviction that the country could not do without him, instead of changing his Ministry. MacMahon made a similar mistake in giving up the Presidency before the full term of seven years had expired, on the very insufficient ground that the Chamber would not adopt his views as to the command of the army. Had he remained in power, he might have been of the greatest use both to the army and to

the country, and might have mitigated many difficulties that have been full of peril to his successor.

It would seem from what Thiers said to me in 1873 that the Duc de Gramont's statements about promised Austrian help to France were not prompted by a desire of self-justification, but by hints from another quarter. Napoleon III died shortly afterwards at Chiselhurst, of the consequences of a serious and dangerous operation. But he only determined on undergoing this operation because he would probably soon have had to show himself in public on horseback. It is certain that a second *retour de l' Ile d 'Elbe* was in preparation, and was to take place on the 20th of March. Great hopes were then entertained of a Napoleonic Restoration, as I saw during my occasional visits at Chiselhurst. Several times the Emperor Napoleon taxed my diplomatic abilities to the utmost with dangerous questions as to the position the Powers would assume in the eventuality of a restoration ; and more than once I heard from Bonapartists the great argument of the 'Gouvernement outilier,' that is, of the government material trained in Imperial traditions which was still at the disposal of France. I was informed, but I cannot guarantee the truth of this information, that Gramont was induced to enter on his campaign against me in order to give a ground for the use, in any proclamation which the Imperialists might issue to the French nation, of the word 'trahi,' generally employed in French bulletins as a justification of defeat. This made such an

impression upon me that I suspended my visits to Chiselhurst for more than a year, and only resumed them when some mutual friends intervened. Only a very strong reason could have induced me to act as I did, for it was not in my nature to avoid those who were deserted by fortune. Moreover, I had always preserved a faithful and grateful memory of the Empress Eugénie in the days of her splendour and power, and I found true pleasure in her conversation, which showed much knowledge and *esprit*. It is a great satisfaction to me to be able to express my opinion of a lady who has been constantly misrepresented. Those who, like myself, have had the opportunity of seeing how deadly was the *ennui* of Chiselhurst, could only praise the fortitude with which it was borne by one who has been repeatedly accused of frivolity and love of pleasure, and who was still remarkably beautiful. She never gave up her mourning; and although the members of the highest aristocracy would have considered it an honour to entertain her at their country houses, she never accepted any invitations but those of the Queen to Windsor. The future of her son was her constant and sole consideration. The Empress Eugénie has been accused of having had an important share in the war of 1870—whether with justice is very doubtful. I have been assured, not by her but by others, that she never called that war 'ma guerre.' One great mistake I fully remember, in which the Empress had a share after the war. The advice which I had

volunteered in order to facilitate a timely agreement with Italy on the basis of the evacuation of Rome—that nothing should be said about the occupation of Rome by the Italians, but that in return for the withdrawal of the French troops Italy should agree to the occupation of some places in the vicinity which were still under the Papal Administration—drew down strong expressions of indignation from her and others upon 'the heretic,' a cry in which even Ollivier joined in his book on the Œcumenical Council.

I became almost indulgent to Gramont when I read the statements of other '*témoins*,' especially those of Count Chaudordy, who acted as delegate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Tours. He says that at the Salzburg Interview in 1867 both Emperors agreed as to the necessity of war—which statement should be compared with my report of that interview.* Then he proceeds as follows :

'Ce qui était certain c'est qu'elle (l'Autriche) était tellement engagée de notre côté que son Gouvernement ne pouvait pas se retourner de longtemps, et qu'il a fallu une lettre directement adressée par le nouvel Empereur d'Allemagne après sa consécration, hélas ! ici-même, à Versailles, pour faciliter au Gouvernement autrichien sa réconciliation avec la Prusse ; et en cela Monsieur de Bismarck a été encore une fois très-habile, car il s'est attaché complètement de cette façon l'Empire austro-hongrois. On se sentait si bien

* See p. 36.

engagé vis-à-vis de nous que, pour s'excuser, on nous disait alors du côté de l'Autriche que ces nouvelles relations nous aideraient à obtenir de meilleures conditions quand viendraient les négociations de paix.'

Then in a parenthesis: 'La sténographie est interrompue par ordre de M. le Président.'

This interruption is perhaps to be regretted, as it would have been amusing to hear the further statements of M. le Comte de Chaudordy.

The word 'se retourner' is very much used in French political language, and is applied to a politician who leaves one party for another. 'Nous lui avons laissé toute une année pour se retourner,' said the Duc de Broglie to me in 1873 after Thiers' fall. Now, according to Count Chaudordy's opinion, Austria found herself in this position, but took a long time in going over to the other side. Why? Because she was too much bound to France. A letter addressed to the Emperor of Austria by the new Emperor of Germany after his 'consecration' at Versailles, was, says Count Chaudordy, therefore necessary. The term 'consecration' at Versailles can only mean the proclamation of the German empire, which took place at Versailles on the 18th of January 1871. Thus up to the second half of January, after the battle of Sedan had been fought, and Napoleon III made prisoner; after Metz had fallen, and the preliminaries of peace were rapidly progressing—Austria found herself, without an Austrian soldier

having moved an inch, in the position of not being able to side with Germany because of her engagements with France! But the best remains behind, for Count Chaudordy must have known, as all the papers could have told him, that already in December 1870 the understanding between Austria and Germany had been completed in *optimâ formâ*, by virtue of the despatch sent by Prince Bismarck to Count Schweinitz at Vienna, and of the corresponding despatch addressed by me to Count Wimpffen at Berlin. And I need scarcely assure the reader that Austria never gave so ridiculous an explanation as that stated by Count Chaudordy, that her agreement with Germany would enable her to procure more favourable conditions of peace for France.

If, on reading the protocols of that Committee of Enquiry, one is amazed at the incredible frivolity of many of the witnesses, one cannot on the other hand admire the questions put by the members of the Committee. It is unintelligible why Count Daru, for instance, who had been Minister of Foreign Affairs, did not ask the Duc de Gramont point-blank: 'Dites-nous, y avait-il, oui ou non, un traité d'alliance avec l'Autriche?' It has never happened in history that two Powers should join in making war without previously concluding a Treaty and a military agreement; and it is scarcely possible to allege a case where, without such a previous agreement, one party informs the other that it is about to enter on a war, and that it

expects the military assistance of the other—especially when the war is an aggressive one.

I am, I repeat it, convinced that Gramont wrote in good faith; but I am equally convinced that he was not clear as to the difference between our attitude before and after the declaration of war; and how little he thought at the time of the alleged views of Prince Metternich and Count Vitzthum, is proved by the words I have above quoted: 'Est ce qu'on s'allie à un battu?'

An important point in the consideration of this question is the attitude we assumed towards Paris after the declaration of war. When the war was over it was easy to say what should have been done; but when the war broke out, who could have prophesied its issue? I was doubly conscious of the heavy responsibility resting upon me, as I was a foreigner summoned to Austria by the Emperor. I cannot say how many sleepless nights this cost me. Had I been an adventurer, my game would have been easy enough. I only had to ask for 600,000,000 francs from Paris, which I would have obtained without difficulty, and then to begin war, first suspending the Constitution and the freedom of the press. This could easily have been done, and even Hungary would not have been in my way, as I shall show in the next chapter. If victorious, I would have been praised to the skies; if defeated, I could easily have left the country. I may say that every step I took was carefully weighed, and regulated according to circum-

stances. The result of my policy for Austria-Hungary has been the cordial friendship of Germany, and the just and sympathetic appreciation of France. Neither the Emperor nor the empire has been injured; the loss has fallen on me alone.

CHAPTER XXVI

1870

NEUTRALITY AND READINESS FOR WAR.—THE ATTITUDE OF RUSSIA.—THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE NEUTRAL POWERS.

As soon as the declaration of war became known, sittings were held of the Cabinet Council, under the presidency of the Emperor. On such occasions the Council is called the Great Council of the Crown. Among those who took part in these sittings were the two Minister-Presidents, Count Potocki and Count Andrassy. The Archduke Albrecht was also at one of the sittings. Besides the declaration of neutrality, the placing of the army on a modified war-footing was decided upon, at a cost of over 20,000,000 florins. The expenditure of this sum gave rise to many attacks upon me by the Hungarians. During the session of the Delegation held at Pesth

at the end of 1870, the Conservative Deputy Nermeny gave notice in Committee of an interpellation asking on what grounds the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had expended those twenty millions. I declared myself ready to answer in the Committee where German was spoken, but I at the same time requested that the Hungarian Minister-President should also be summoned. My opponents were somewhat taken aback when I answered that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had nothing to do with the question, but that the expenditure was resolved upon in a general Council of Ministers, in which the Minister-Presidents of both portions of the Empire took part. Moreover, the decree for a partial mobilisation was proposed, not by myself, but by Count Andrassy. In 1874, when I was Ambassador in London, the Deputy Zsédenyi (whose real name was Pfannenschmidt) referred to the grant of the 20,000,000 florins in a speech strongly condemning my policy, and fervently praising that of my successor. Count Andrassy politely answered that he had no desire to be praised at the expense of his predecessor, whose policy he had simply continued.

I was surprised at Count Andrassy's proposal, but not unpleasantly so, for reasons to be developed in the next chapter. Its secret tendency could only be directed against Russia; and possibly eventualities of a defensive nature, justifying the motion, were at that time not impossible. In those days, immediately after the declaration of war, it was considered likely

that the French would advance into German territory; and Count Potocki, whose vast Russian estates made him a competent judge of Russian affairs, asserted that if the French armies were victorious, Poland would certainly rise, and Russia would then be compelled to contemplate not only an occupation of the kingdom of Poland, but also of Galicia. The eventuality of a war with Russia soon after assumed a definite shape when she arbitrarily withdrew from the Treaty of Paris. I shall return to this subject in its proper place.

One of the *fables convenues* circulated in connection with the events of the year 1870, is the story that Austria was prevented from going to war by Russia. Such an intervention never took place, and in the Viennese Archives there is not a trace of any evidence of Russian threats or warnings. I will not deny that Russia might have declared war against Austria had the latter taken the field against Germany. As Austria did not do so, I can fully understand why Russia took great credit to herself with Germany for this supposed intervention; what is less intelligible is that Germany should have believed the story. Prince Bismarck certainly knew the real state of affairs; but it was all-important to him at that period to be on good terms with Russia, and to make his relations with her popular in Germany; and this may explain the demonstrative manner in which the Emperor Alexander and his Government were thanked.

The truth is that Russia found fault with the

Austrian preparations, purchases of horses, etc., and that the Emperor Alexander, even more than Prince Gortschakoff, expressed some annoyance to Count Chotek on the subject. Remembering the words I have quoted from Count Potocki, I could only see in Russia's objections a further justification of the measures that had been taken. Nothing was said by Russia, however, of the war preparations being directed against Russia or Prussia ; her objections were partly founded on the necessity in which Russia would be placed of taking costly measures of defence against Poland, and partly on the consideration that the neutral powers would be far better qualified to mediate at the right moment between the belligerents if they were not armed. 'Le moment viendra,' said Prince Gortschakoff to Count Chotek, 'où la grande Europe interviendra sans cocarde.' I reminded the Russian Chancellor of these words two months later, when I wrote to Count Chotek : 'Le moment d'intervenir est peut être venu, et en effet je ne vois pas de cocarde, mais je ne vois pas non plus d'Europe.' The expression : 'Je ne vois plus d'Europe,' is also to be found in a despatch published in the Red Book for 1870, and it had for a time the honour of passing into a proverb. I remember later on, when I was again Ambassador, somebody said to me during the Dulcigno affair :* 'Comme vous avez raison de dire que vous ne voyez plus d'Europe !' To which I re-

* Another happy bon mot was made by Count Beust on this occasion. Someone asked him how matters were progressing in the Dulcigno question. 'Dulcigno !' was his reply : 'Dolce-gno far niente.'

plied : ' Mais oui, je la vois, mais dans quel deshabillé!' The attitude of the neutral Powers during the Franco-German War proved that I was right. Austria-Hungary was the only Power which sincerely and emphatically advocated a collective intervention of the Powers for the purpose of a peaceful mediation, and she was the only Power that neither sought nor obtained any advantage from the war. Italy profited by the misfortunes of France, to whom she owed her existence, by seizing on Rome ; Russia withdrew from her obligations under the Treaty of Paris in direct violation of the law of nations ; England sold arms and ammunition to the belligerents. I may mention in this place a circumstance which is little known. Confidential negotiations were opened for the purpose of placing the Grand-Duke of Tuscany, whose ancestors had reigned over Lorraine, on the throne of Alsace-Lorraine. The proposal was decisively rejected.

At first certain attempts were made to bring about an intervention of the neutral Powers, but neither St Petersburg nor Florence had any serious intention of interfering, and England was induced to be equally passive by a mission from Minghetti to Gladstone. The result was the English proposal contained in a letter addressed by Lord Granville to Count Apponyi on the 17th of August, 1870—the so-called ' ligue des neutres,' which merely consisted of a declaration on the part of the neutral Powers that each intended to maintain its neutrality, and

would inform the others should it cease to be neutral. Russia and Italy immediately accepted this arrangement, which they themselves had suggested, and then nothing remained for us to do but to join them.

As an explanation of the lukewarm spirit in which the question of mediation was treated, it has been alleged that the amazing rapidity of the German victories virtually decided the war. On this point I wrote as follows to Count Chotek :—

'Quelque prodigieux qu'aient été les succès remportés par les armes de la Prusse et celles de ses alliés, il y a toujours une France vis-à-vis de l'Allemagne. Sans doute il est peu probable que les Français parviennent à mettre en campagne des forces capables de tenir tête aux armées allemandes, mais tant que celles-ci ne seront pas parvenues à reduire deux places de premier ordre comme Paris et Metz, l'on ne saurait dire que la guerre a cessé. Il reste deux parties contendantes entre lesquelles l'action médiatrice et modératrice de l'Europe a toute faculté de s'exercer.

'Je maintiens ce que j'ai dit dans une de mes dépêches au Comte Apponyi : ce n'est pas seulement à mitiger les exigences du vainqueur que devraient tendre les efforts combinés des Puissances ; c'est encore à adoucir l'amertume des sentiments qui doivent accabler le vaincu, et à faciliter à un peuple si cruellement éprouvé et si délicat sur le point d'honneur les résolutions que lui impose la nécessité. Je suis confirmé dans cette opinion par ce que m'a écrit récemment le Prince de Metternich, qui pense que les conditions

qu'on dictera à la France, si dures qu'elles puissent être, seraient bien plus facilement consenties si elles lui étaient recommandées par la voix unanime des Puissances impartiales que si elle avait simplement à subir la loi du vainqueur. Un télégrame que j'ai reçu ces jours-ci de Tours vient également à l'appui de cette manière de.'

'Les avantages d'une action collective de l'Europe neutre me paraissent donc hors de doute, et dussé-je prêcher dans le désert, je ne me lasserai pas de les faire ressortir.'

The German historians who are so fond of making out that Bismarck's 'iron hand' prevented European intervention, forgot to add that this was after all a very easy task. The 'iron hand' putting down the intervention of the neutral Powers, is as much a fiction as the arm of Russia deterring Austria from going to war. I do not deny that if the Neutral Powers had really intended to intervene effectually, they would have felt the 'iron hand;' but as events turned out, Bismarck had ample time to occupy himself with more pressing affairs than the subjection of the neutral Powers. The facts above stated show why their attitude was so harmless. It would be more difficult to say whether their collective intervention would have been successful and advantageous to the true interests of Europe. There were moments after the battle of Sedan when the authorities at the German head-quarters entertained grave apprehensions, not of the final issue of the war, but of the

further sacrifices it would entail. Even Prince Bismarck himself told me at the time of our interview at Gastein that the prolongation of the siege of Paris would have been very doubtful had Metz held out another fortnight. It cannot be denied that a fairly successful intervention of the neutral Powers would not only have made the victors more moderate in their demands, but would have convinced the vanquished of the uselessness of continuing the struggle, and have placed Europe in a much more dignified position after the war was over. The overwhelming predominance of a single member of the European family of States has never been considered a blessing. The genius, wisdom, and moderation of the Emperor William and his Chancellor avoided the fatal course pursued by Napoleon I, and the German empire has hitherto justified its claims to be considered an empire of peace. But the future is dark, however reassuring may be the guarantees afforded by those who now have the direction of German affairs; and it would have been a great security for Germany herself and for the peace of Europe, if the neutral Powers had bound themselves not only to prevent excessive demands on the part of Germany, but also not to participate either actively or passively in any French enterprise of revenge.

It will not be denied that considerations of humanity formed an important element in this question. Had the neutral Powers intervened, much

blood would have been saved, and the losses inflicted by the war on industry and commerce—from which Germany has suffered more than France, notwithstanding the milliards—would have been considerably reduced.

CHAPTER XXVII

1870

OTHER EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1870.—DECLARATION OF THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE, AND OF THE INVALIDITY OF THE CONCORDAT.

In 1870 I was obliged to give up my annual visit to Gastein. The Emperor thought I had better not leave Vienna; and the incessant excitement of that time might have made the Gastein cure more injurious to me than its omission. But the Emperor did me the honour of assigning apartments for my use in the 'Stöckel-Schlösschen,' situated in the Schönbrunn Park, where I passed my nights. Every morning I went up to Vienna, chiefly on horseback. Avoiding the noisy 'Mariahilfer Vorstadt,' I proceeded through the 'Schmelz,' the quiet 'Josefstadt,' and the 'Glacis,' which at that date had not yet been built over. It became a tradition to assign the 'Stöckel-

Schlösschen' to my successors, which was much to their advantage. For me that Imperial building was full of reminiscences. The Saxon Royal Family inhabited it in 1866, and it was there that I took my leave of the King. It was afterwards the residence of the Hanoverian Royal Family.

I have said that the year 1870 was one of incessant excitement. It was so to me from beginning to end. First came the split in the cis-Leithan Ministry, and the battles I consequently had to fight in the Reichsrath ; then the resignation of the Hasner Ministry, and the painful birth and abortive policy of the Potocki Ministry ; then the proclamation of Papal Infallibility, the invasion of Rome by the Italians, the violation of the Treaty of Paris by Russia, and finally, the Franco-German War. The disastrous complications that took place beyond our frontiers were not indeed in any way brought about by the Imperial Government, and it could not therefore feel the weight of any responsibility for their origin. But the same could not be said of the possible consequences of these events. It was almost a miracle that my by no means robust constitution bore up for a whole year against daily and hourly agitation.

In former chapters I have entered into details on the question of the Concordat and the position assumed by Austria-Hungary towards the Œcumenical Council. Two events happened in this year which were intimately connected with each other—the

proclamation of the Dogma of Papal Infallibility and the declaration by the Cabinet of Vienna of the invalidity of the Concordat. Minute and exhaustive despatches on both subjects were submitted to the Delegations which met at Pesth in 1870. It so happened that this session of the Delegations—the least quiet session in which I took part—was held at a time when I was still pursued by the very undeserved, but no less profound, rancour of the Constitutional Party. This produced the curious result that the despatches which maintained against the Papal See the views and policy of the 'Bürgerministerium' received scarcely any mark of approval from those members of the Delegations who belonged to the Constitutional Party; nay, even more, that their leader, Dr Herbst, became the ally and champion of the ultra-clerical Monsignor Greuter. The latter made a passionate speech appealing to the discontent of the Constitutional party, and gaining their applause, which hitherto he had never succeeded in doing. Referring to the Red-Book, he said that he was reminded by it of the will of a Swedish 'General,' who remarked to his son, 'You do not know with how little wisdom the world is governed.' I replied at once as follows: 'The honourable Deputy has expressed his opinion with great openness, beginning his speech with a saying which is indeed historical, but, so far as I know, was uttered by a Swedish Chancellor. His words were indeed striking: but in Oxenstierna's time people governed much and talked little.

Were he alive now, he would perhaps express himself in a different manner.' In spite of the unfavourable, nay, almost hostile temper of the Chamber, this reply was received with much laughter. Of course, Monsignor Greuter's attacks were levelled chiefly against my conduct with regard to the Concordat. But it is remarkable that he ended by saying that the abolition of the Concordat was not to be regretted, and that it was a 'felix culpa.' Perhaps his words were not to be taken quite literally; but I cannot help mentioning on this occasion that eminent dignitaries of the Catholic Church with whom I happened to converse on the subject, declared themselves opposed, from an ecclesiastical point of view, to the conclusion of Concordats. One of these was the Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Darboy, who was shot during the summer as a hostage. As the two others are still living, I do not feel myself at liberty to give their names. They did not belong to the Austrian Episcopate.

I will now say a few words as to the Œcumenical Council.

In a former chapter I have explained the attitude assumed by Austria-Hungary towards the Council. This attitude was taken up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in concurrence with the Ministers of both portions of the empire. However much the Government may have had cause to look with anxiety to the decisions of the Council, it was of opinion that any precipitate intervention would be unadvisable,

especially as it was expected that there would be a strong minority, including eminent members of the Austrian as well as of the German Episcopacy, which would only lose in public esteem if it appeared to be supported by the various Governments. But our Cabinet did not on this account refrain from entering into communication with that minority, thus removing every doubt as to its eventual attitude towards the decisions of the Council, without prejudice to the respect and veneration due to the Holy See. Before the Council began, I wrote to the Ambassador, Count Trauttmannsdorff, on the 21st of October 1869 as follows:

'Tout en manifestant une sympathie bienveillante pour l'action favorable que le Concile peut exercer afin de fortifier et de développer les sentiments religieux chez les nations catholiques, Votre Excellence ne devra laisser s'élever aucun doute sur la ferme résolution du Gouvernement Impérial et Royal de maintenir la ligne de démarcation qu'il a tracé entre les droits de l'État et ceux de l'Église, et de se conformer invariablement à l'esprit de la législation actuellement en vigueur.'

Count Trauttmannsdorff had expressed the hope 'that the majority, in order to avoid decisions "per majora," would proceed with such moderation as would allow the minority to agree with them.' I was unable to share this view; and foreseeing that the majority would be aggressive, I wrote: 'Under all the circumstances, the praiseworthy attitude of the

minority would not be of value unless it not only showed the Governments and populations at home that it shared their views, but also made up its mind to prevent dangerous decisions on the part of the Council, and to make some decided manifestation in case of defeat. Otherwise, the Opposition will do but little service to the views it represents, and will not attain the object of producing a salutary impression. I cannot sufficiently urge your Excellency to lay stress on this last consideration in your conversations with the members of the minority.' What eventually happened is well known. A demonstrative manifestation would not have been necessary to prevent decisions unwelcome to the minority; it would have been enough for the minority to vote against them, as the decision of the majority would not have sufficed. But to our deep regret we perceived that the leaders of the Opposition, Cardinals Rauscher and Schwarzenberg, Archbishop Haynald and Bishop Strossmayer, as well as the other members of the minority, preferred to abstain from voting, thus enabling the decision to be unanimous. We addressed our warnings, not only to the minority, but also to the Holy See itself, as may be seen from the despatch to Count Trauttmannsdorff of the 10th of February 1870.

I have a special reason for alluding to those proceedings of our Cabinet. Attempts have been made to explain the declaration of the invalidity of the Concordat, which was the consequence of the

proclamation of Papal Infallibility, by momentary difficulties and inspirations of internal policy; and it was believed that the Potocki Ministry wished to gain popularity by this bold step. The characters of the Ministers in question suffice to refute this charge. In a former passage I stated how difficult it was for Count Potocki to affix his name to the ecclesiastical laws. He did so with patriotic self-sacrifice, seeing that it was imperative; but no one will believe that he was capable of adopting, merely from political motives, a measure of such vital importance to the Church as the abolition of the Concordat. Nor must we forget that the Minister of Public Worship and Instruction, Dr von Stremayr, whose religious views were not quite the same as Potocki's, though he was equally conscientious, made the question a subject of deep study, and that it was in consequence of the representations he submitted to the Council of Ministers that the Emperor gave his consent to the measure. It will be seen that after what had happened, the Roman Curia could not have been taken by surprise by the declaration of the invalidity of the Concordat

CHAPTER XXVIII

1870

CONTINUATION.—TWO UNTOWARD EVENTS.—THE OCCUPATION OF ROME, AND THE VIOLATION OF THE TREATY OF PARIS.

If I say 'untoward events,' I only use this expression because both of the measures to which I refer produced on the whole a by no means agreeable surprise, as is usually the case when arbitrary measures are taken, whatever may be the current of public opinion at the time. I myself was not surprised by them; indeed I may say that I can claim the merit of having foreseen their probability, and of having left nothing undone that could have directed what was inevitable into more regular and less violent channels. In a former chapter I gave details as to what had been done in this respect many years previously with regard to the Treaty of Paris and the occupation of Rome. I will here briefly allude to the policy of Austria on this subject.

It was easy to foresee that after the Franco-German War broke out, the safety and independence of the Papal Government, which was protected by the French garrison, would be endangered, even if France should be victorious. In view of the invasion already attempted by Garibaldi at Mentana, which was only frustrated by the timely intervention of the French troops, it was certain that a similar attempt would be repeated with greater energy, and that this would necessitate an increase of the French garrison. Of course, after the French disasters, things became much worse. A timely agreement of France with Italy on the one hand, and with Rome on the other, might have led to a compromise, under which Italy might have occupied several places in the Papal States, with the exception of Rome. Only in this way would the Papal troops have been strong enough to keep Rome; and if Italy had been true to her engagements, a basis might have been gained for an understanding between Rome and Florence. But my suggestions to this effect were badly received in Paris, where people suspected me because I was a Protestant. Thus nothing was done beyond an ineffectual renewal of the September Convention, after Austria had withdrawn from the affair in consequence of the attitude of the French Government.

After the occupation of Rome, the Ministry, and I in particular, received countless applications from Catholic societies, which, as was to be expected, were strongly supported by Monsignor Greuter. I had

a powerful weapon ready against all reproaches addressed to the Government on account of its passive attitude—namely, the precedent of the annexation of a large portion of the Papal States in 1860, against which Austria did not protest, although the opportunity for intervention was far more favourable than in 1870.

My conduct was more appreciated in Rome than in Vienna, incredible as this may seem. I said in the speech I then made: 'In Rome, where a much sounder view of politics has always been taken than by her would-be defenders in Austria, this idea (the partial occupation of Papal territory) was much more favourably received than in Vienna, and the Government has been more favourably judged, as is proved by all the communications I have received on the subject up to the most recent date.'

It will be seen from the Red Book of 1870 (report of the Chargé d'Affaires Chevalier von Palomba), how much Rome appreciated my policy, as Cardinal Antonelli requested the representative of Austria 'to give Count Beust his sincerest thanks.' Although we refused to come forward with a protest or manifesto which it would have been impossible to follow up, and which, without material assistance, would not only have been ineffectual, but would also have diminished the weight of our influence in Florence, we were all the more desirous of using our influence after the occupation in favour of the Pope, and in this we were successful. How much, on the other

hand, the attitude and language of the Cabinet of Vienna were appreciated in Florence, may be gathered from the despatch of Signor Visconti-Venosta to Signor Minghetti, Ambassador in Vienna, dated 21st September, 1870 (Red Book No. 150), a document worthy of perusal even at the present day. As an illustration of *tempora mutantur* I may state that fifteen years later the Cabinet of Vienna declined to receive the envoy selected by the United States, because in 1870 he had expressed as much indignation at the occupation of Rome as Austria herself.

We now come to the second 'untoward event': Russia's arbitrary violation of the Articles of the Treaty of Paris limiting her power in the Black Sea. In a former chapter I have shown how I always considered that the idea of the Paris Congress to neutralise the Black Sea was a complete mistake, the only tangible result of it being that national feeling in Russia was deeply wounded by such an unnatural restriction of the power of an empire of 80,000,000 inhabitants, and that it was therefore quite untenable for any lengthened period. It was easy to foresee that the only way to prevent a collision on this question was to revise the Treaty of Paris. Three years previously I had proposed such a revision with the double object of abolishing the restriction on Russia, and of admitting a European control over the internal affairs of Turkey. When Russia made her famous declaration in 1870, the Cabinet of St Petersburg appeared highly surprised

and taken aback on finding the strongest opposition in the very quarter from which had emanated the suggestion of a revision of the Treaty. This could only have been by an intentional disregard of the fact that my initiative had the object of bringing about the modification in strict accordance with the law of nations, while Russia broke that law by a one-sided, arbitrary and illegal proceeding. Nor was the Cabinet of Vienna alone in its severe condemnation of this step; the reply of the English Cabinet was in a similar sense. But the first despatch which expressed Lord Granville's opinion on the subject was soon followed by a second, which was, it is true, also signed with the name of Granville, but which breathed the spirit of Gladstone. More than ever did my words come true: 'Je ne vois plus d'Europe.' Where else could Europe have been found than in England and in Austria? In Prussia, which had been gained in advance; or in Italy, who was at that moment less inclined than ever to uphold the principle of European control; or in France, who was sinking under the burthen of an unequal contest? I think it was greatly to Austria's honour that she sternly and persistently reprobated the flagrant violation of the Treaty. Others may some day have greater cause than ourselves to regret that our protest was not supported. In a recent historical work, Jäger's History of the Franco-German War, I read the following passage, which is evidently intended to annihilate me: 'Only a very narrow-minded

politician could wonder that Russia seized that moment for breaking the Treaty.' The historian probably did not contemplate the application of that principle to Alsace.

Even at the present moment I do not regret the somewhat harsh tone of my despatch to Count Chotek on this subject.* If it gave offence at St Petersburg, the displeasure of Russia was not vented on Austria, but on myself. My successor, who thought I had not acted with sufficient energy, was overwhelmed with honours and praises at St Petersburg, while I was punished in London by the demonstrative rudeness of the Czar, who explained his conduct to his brother-in-law, Prince Alexander of Hesse, by saying that I was the 'deadliest enemy of Russia.' My conscience is at peace. But it is possible those words originated in other less known circumstances.

In a former chapter I have shown that the gratitude shown by Germany to Russia after the war was little deserved. She had more reason to be grateful to England. Instead of sending to Versailles Lord Odo Russell, a great friend and ally of Prince Bismarck, the English Government could and ought to have commissioned a stiff Englishman to ask point-blank whether the Prussian Government approved of the step taken by Russia or not, and whether Prussia would or would not join in collective steps against that measure, on the understanding that

* See Appendix E.

if the answer were in the affirmative, Prussia (the German empire was not yet formed) would join England and Austria-Hungary in a decided protest, and that if it were in the negative, England would regard Prussia as an enemy, and would treat her as an ally of Russia. In such a case Austria-Hungary would have joined England; indeed in any measure directed against Russia, she was certain of the support of Austrians and Hungarians alike.

We must not forget in what manner the decisive events of that year succeeded each other. During the interviews at Ems which preceded the war, Russia secured the consent of Prussia to the violation of the Treaty of Paris which was to be effected after the war. But Prince Gortschakoff, who probably knew better than others by what means Prince Bismarck managed to conclude an arrangement with Benedetti after the war of 1866 on the subject of the rectification of the Saarbrücken frontier, thought it advisable to carry out his intention before the Franco-German War was over. The action of Russia thus coincided with the most critical period of the campaign; and I am informed, on most trustworthy authority, that this greatly enraged Prince Bismarck. Lord Odo Russell happened to arrive just at that moment. If a more uncompromising envoy had been sent to Versailles, the Franco-German War might have taken a different turn; but it is more probable that Prince Bismarck, in his anger with Prince Gortschakoff, would have sided with the other

Powers. He would have had a ready pretext in Russia's departure from the agreement she had made with him; the Russian Circular would then have become a dead letter, and the Treaty of Paris would have been maintained in its integrity.

I suggested a similar idea (although after the first English Note) to Lord Bloomfield, the English Ambassador in Vienna, and I have been informed that his despatch on the subject has been published in the Blue Book. I have not been able to verify this statement, but I have no reason to doubt it, and it seems that at St Petersburg they were acquainted with the despatch.

But Gladstone was then Premier, Lord Odo Russell was welcome at Versailles, and the dispute was closed by the London Protocol, which gave the sanction of Europe to the act against which Europe had protested, and yet again asserted the principle that a treaty could only be altered with the concurrence of those who have concluded it. This is much as if a judicial tribunal were to declare theft a crime and yet to allow the thief to keep what he has stolen.

CHAPTER XXIX

1870

THE BLACK SEA AND THE CZECHS.—GALICIA.—KLACZKO.

My answer to the Russian violation of the Treaty of Paris was most favourably received and strongly supported by the Viennese papers, and especially by the *Neue Freie Presse*. It appeared therefore all the more remarkable, and only to be explained by personal hostility, that the Delegations took no notice of it. But no—I am mistaken: a North-Bohemian Deputy, of whom it was said that his pronunciation must have reminded me of my native country, made the following remark, which must have sounded strangely in an Austrian Representative Assembly: 'What is the Black Sea to us?'

The leaders of the Czech movement, however,

thought they had something to do with the Black Sea, but only for the purpose of declaring that Russia ought not to be disturbed in her possession of it. This was one of the chief points of the then much talked of memorandum presented to me by Dr Rieger in the name of his party and of the Bohemian nation.

Although I was compelled to tell the Bohemian nation that it would do well not to meddle with the affairs of Russia, especially at a time when that Power and Austria were at variance, I was also obliged at the same time indirectly to request the Russian Government not to interfere with the internal affairs of Austria-Hungary. Count Apponyi, our Ambassador in London, on his return from Ems, where the Russo-Prussian consultations had taken place, was informed by the English Foreign Secretary that both Governments looked with suspicion and displeasure on the concessions which had been made to Galicia, and Lord Clarendon thought it necessary to warn the Austrian Government of this. I then wrote to Count Apponyi a despatch* which Dr Herbst afterwards strongly censured in the Delegation for 'its interference in internal affairs,' while the very object of the despatch was to prevent unwarrantable interference by other Powers in our internal affairs.

The year 1870 brought me several times into contact with Poland. The Commercial Chamber of Brody elected me as its member in the Galician Diet, but I could not take my seat, being detained by

* See Appendix F.

events in Vienna. In the following year, my position towards the Hohenwart Ministry made it again impossible for me to sit in the Diet, and in the year after that, when I was appointed Ambassador, I returned the mandate.

Julian Klaczko, for many years a well-known contributor to the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and the author of the much-read work 'Les Deux Chanceliers,' entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, shortly before the Franco-German War broke out, as 'Hof und Ministerial Rath.' His talents and his works do not need any praise of mine, but I feel called upon to pay a tribute of sympathetic remembrance to his noble mind and conduct.

He was elected member of the Galician Diet, and allowed himself to be carried away by his patriotic feelings to such an extent that he made a violent speech in favour of France which was totally at variance with his official position. This would have had very unpleasant consequences for the Ministry and for me in particular, had Klaczko not hastened at once to send in his resignation. The letter in which he did this deserves to be inserted here :

Vienne, *Septembre* 5, 1870.

Monsieur le Comte !—Obligé envers la France par vingt années d'une hospitalité libéralement accordée, profondément pénétré en outre de l'immense péril que le triomphe définitif de la Prusse créerait à l'équilibre Européen et à l'existence même de

l'Autriche, j'ai saisi la première occasion qui s'est présentée pour exprimer hautement cette conviction personnelle.

Devant une assemblée polonaise j'ai fait appel à nos anciennes sympathies, qui à l'heure qu'il est me semblaient s'accorder entièrement avec notre dévouement pour les intérêts de l'Empire Autrichien. En agissant ainsi, j'accomplissais un devoir que ma conscience m'imposait, mais je ne me faisais pas illusion sur la grave responsabilité personnelle que j'assumais comme fonctionnaire public, attaché au Ministère de Votre Excellence.

J'ai donc l'honneur de remettre ma démission aux mains de Votre Excellence, en La priant de vouloir bien être indulgente envers une conduite assurément irrégulière, mais inspirée par des sentiments sincères, et de ne point douter de la profonde gratitude et de l'affectueux respect que je porterai toujours à l'homme d'état eminent dont il m'a été donné d'apprécier le cœur grand, bon et généreux.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur le Comte, avec le plus profond respect, de Votre Excellence, le très-humble et très-dévoué serviteur

JULIAN KLACZKO.

CHAPTER XXX

1870

OUR RELATIONS WITH GERMANY AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR.

I HAD the opportunity of observing many curious phenomena during my involuntary stay at Vienna after Königgrätz and Nikolsburg. Among these was the readiness, I might almost say, the indifference, with which Austria allowed herself to be expelled from the German Confederation. What was even more strange was that some actually regarded this expulsion as a fortunate event and a liberation from irksome bonds. The loss of the Venetian Provinces was almost more felt than that of the position in the German body of States and Kingdoms which Austria had held for centuries, and which had given her so much power and honour. That such views should prevail in official circles will not be very

astonishing if one considers the tendency of the Federalistic Ministry of those days, which was more inclined to the Slav than to the German element; but this only made it the more strange that the same views should have been held by the general public. I must confess that I never felt any illusion as to the great and dangerous consequences that might arise from the expulsion of Austria from Germany. I knew very well that it was necessary to yield to the inevitable, but I was no less convinced that the privileged position of the German element in Austria —that its claim to the foremost place in the State and the Army both as regards language and administration—was less justified by historical Austrian tradition than by the rights and duties of Austria as the principal member of the body of German States; and that when those rights and duties ceased, the claim of the German element to supremacy in Austria ceased also. It was mere blindness and folly to cherish any illusions on this subject. An increasing rivalry between the Slav and the German element, which was numerically the weaker, now became inevitable. I think I have sufficiently proved that I did not underrate the German element. I saved the Germans twice: once when Belcredi threw them over, and again when Hohenwart did so. The first time I was successful; the second I was dragged down myself. I have forgiven their ingratitude, but I regret that they paid little heed to my advice when it was of some weight, and that they hesitated to accept the logical

conclusion of the expulsion of Austria from Germany. The old dominant position was not to be preserved by merely ignoring the change that had taken place, nor by an acrimonious assertion of predominance; but it could have been, and could yet be preserved if the German element in Austria would perceive that its task does not consist only in self-defence, but that it must be, as in other non-German States, united within itself. It would be folly to demand or even to wish that the German should do in Austria what he does elsewhere as an immigrant because it is the German who most easily becomes Anglicised in England, Americanised in America, and Frenchified, even after the war, in France. On the contrary, it should be his endeavour, while retaining his individuality, to separate himself as little as possible from the Slavs, who, almost without exception, understand and speak German. The task requires effort and self-control, but it is not without a prospect of success. It is obvious that the Government must have a large share in such a task; and experience shows that if it intervenes too much, or too little, or on its own initiative, it only does harm. The alienation of the German element is a serious danger. It would be dangerous not only to the Austro-Hungarian empire, but also to the German Austrians themselves. With all due respect for the power and capacity of the German empire and of Prussia in particular, I am convinced that if the German Austrians were incorporated into Germany, they would soon look back with sorrowful regret on

their happy past. Once, during a conversation on the Prussian cultus in Austria, I took the liberty of saying to the Emperor: 'I know a remedy that would be effectual if it were feasible; if your Majesty were to send for two Prussian Provincial Presidents, four Prussian Government Presidents, twenty Prussian "Landräthe," and two hundred Prussian tax-gatherers, I would lay a wager that in three months everybody would implore you to restore the old régime.' Yet the German frontier is nearer than the Russian, and events are stronger than men; while on the other hand a considerable portion of the inhabitants of the German empire were very reluctant to become its subjects.

If my readers ask why the history of the war of 1870 gives rise to these reflections, they will find an explanation in those that follow.

The more I had made up my mind as to the consequences of the expulsion of Austria from the German Confederation, the more imperative did I find it to investigate the question whether there were yet means at hand to counteract these consequences. The only way of doing this would have been to exercise some influence on German affairs.

After the construction of the German empire in 1871, by which Southern was united to Northern Germany in one political organisation, Austrian interference became impossible; but up to that moment the position of affairs was such that Austrian interference would have been easy. Germany never took the Peace of Prague quite seriously; but its stipulations

were certainly so intended. If the relinquishment by Austria of any influence on the new formation of Germany is held to have meant that Austria gave up for all time the right of protest against future changes, this view is opposed to the fact that the Peace of Prague not only stipulated the withdrawal of Austria from Germany, but ratified the constitution of Southern Germany as an independent body. This provision, had it only related to Prussia and Southern Germany, could not have found room in a treaty between Austria and Prussia unless it was intended to offer a security to Austria and an eventual right of protest. Austria never relinquished that view, unassailable as it was from a legal standpoint, until the construction of the German empire deprived it of practical significance. In the South German States, especially in Würtemberg and Hesse, a similar view was at times strongly expressed ; in Bavaria it was thrown into the shade by the personal opinions of Prince Clovis Hohenlohe ; but it is a not uninteresting circumstance that his successor, Count Bray, entered into correspondence with me on the subject shortly before the outbreak of the war. Count Bray had been Ambassador in Vienna, and in our young days he was an intimate friend of mine at Göttingen; and his inquiry as to my opinion of the political situation was made rather as from one friend to another, than from the Bavarian Premier to the Austrian Chancellor. His inquiry and my reply both came too late to be of practical importance.

His letter was dated the 10th of July, mine the 14th. My answer was to the following effect: 'Bavaria has excellent cards in her hand; if she plays them well, her voice may be decisive in Berlin and in Paris for the preservation of peace. The Treaties of 1866 are defensive. If Bavaria will firmly declare at Berlin that should Prussia go to war against France merely because of the candidature for the Spanish Throne, Bavaria will not consider herself bound to take the field with the Prussian army; and if she declares with equal firmness in Paris that an attack on German territory by France would compel Bavaria to take arms against her, the effect on both sides will soon be evident.'

This advice came too late, as the French declaration of war was issued on the 15th July.

What I have said above will explain an idea which remained secret, but which occupied me for a time very seriously. I have reminded the reader that it was expected when the war broke out that France would advance in great strength, and that she might possibly proceed as far as Munich. The mobilisation advocated by Count Andrassy and accepted by the Council of Ministers was very welcome to me, as I have already stated, because of that possibility. If Austria should vigorously interfere to impose a limit on the French invasion, she might regain her lost ascendency in Germany. We were bound by no engagements to France, and there was nothing to prevent us from placing ourselves between the com-

batants. A development of this idea will be found at the conclusion of the memorandum which I placed before the Emperor at the end of December, and which I append to this chapter.

When this memorandum was drawn up, the general current of feeling in Austria did not, it is true, run in the same channel, which was partly owing to a transient feeling of hostility to Prussia, particularly prevalent in military circles, where an idea was even entertained of availing ourselves of the then very difficult position of the German Army in France. A Prussian General, who was on intimate terms with me, asked me plainly when we met for the first time after the war: 'Pray tell me how it happened that you did not attack us?' The answer to this question will be found in the memorandum which I drew up and placed before the Emperor, and which ran as follows :—

VIENNA, *December* 25, 1870.

At the moment when a reply must be sent to the Prussian despatch on the subject of the new formation of Germany, it is essential to obtain a clear view of all the circumstances of the case.

The peculiar state of Austrian public opinion is shown by the fact that the courteous and unusually flattering language of the Prussian Government has met, not with a response, but with an almost frigid reception ; that after the necessity of an understanding, nay, of an alliance, with Prussia had been constantly

declared, we are now warned not to accept the proffered friendship; and finally, that after persistent rumours had been spread that the anti-Prussian Count Beust was the only obstacle to an agreement with Berlin, the public is now almost accusing the Chancellor of being in secret and criminal communication with Prussia.

Under the growth of this superficial and ephemeral opinion may be discovered some ideas which are more worthy of attention.

Sincere patriots think that Prussia (in which term I comprise North Germany), has not been a true friend, and will not be one in future; that at this moment she is in a difficult, nay, a dangerous position; that it is owing to that position that the Cabinet of Berlin uses such conciliatory language; and that the moment is now at hand for attacking Prussia with a favourable prospect of success, while after the complete prostration of France every possibility of so doing would be at an end.

But sentiment alone cannot influence policy. In order to be clear on this subject, we must realise the consequences of action, for an attitude of reserve would only tend at the same time to destroy the advantages of hostility and those of friendship. Thus the question simply is: Instead of replying cordially and politely to the Prussian communication, shall we reply in a tone enabling us to quarrel with Prussia? Such a resolution would have to be very serious and firm; for it is easy to foresee that the publication of

an answer in this sense would infallibly call forth in all organs of public opinion strong expressions of sympathy with Germany and of fear of Prussia—in fact, a complete contradiction of the ideas they now profess.

I do not wish any other interpretation to be given to this remark than that words must immediately be followed by action ; and the question is whether action would be useful and possible. Action can, under the circumstances, be nothing less than immediate war.

The first point to be considered is : Have we the means of making war, and what are the chances of success ?

We are at the outset confronted by the circumstance that with the exception of the Galicians, and possibly of the Tyrolese, we could not expect in either Delegation a single voice in favour of war. Moreover, whether we are prepared for war is doubtful, in spite of all the progress we have made. We must not forget that the first consequence of our sending an army into the field would be to set Russia in motion, and that that empire possesses sufficient forces, notwithstanding the necessity of keeping down Poland, to create a strong diversion in our rear.

But, independently of these two considerations, we may reasonably apprehend that a declaration of war on our part would be of great service to Prussia.

We would have to base our calculations on Prussia being fully employed in France, thus leaving Germany practically undefended.

At the Prussian headquarters, which seem to have been for some time under an erroneous impression of the powers of resistance possessed by France, there can now be no further doubt on that subject.

Should France be speedily rendered prostrate, it would be easy to transfer all the German forces to Germany, and to send them against us. If France makes such efforts as will enable her to prolong the contest, our attack would be a welcome pretext for Germany to withdraw honourably from an enterprise whose consequences are incalculable, and to enter on another with results of a far more certain character. The Austro-German Provinces, with a sympathising population, would be an infinitely more precious acquisition to Prussia than the Franco-German provinces, with a population whose affections are entirely devoted to France.

Thus, even with an absolutist régime and a highly-efficient army, serious objections may be raised to a warlike policy.

But that idea may be abandoned all the more safely as the consequences which a pessimistic view might regard as likely to follow are by no means incredible.

It is sufficient to draw attention to the exhaustion of Prussia and Germany which might result even after brilliant victories and a huge indemnity, and which would give us time to complete our measures of defence for possible eventualities. And what a favourable chance there would be for a successful

intervention of Austria if Prussia were defeated ! In such a case the fate of Germany would lie in Austria's hands, especially if Austria should now express herself in a sense friendly to Prussia and to Germany.

CHAPTER XXXI

1871

THE LAST DEBATES IN THE DELEGATION.—ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.—KLACZKO, KURANDA, AND GISKRA.

The session of the Delegation at Pesth in 1870-1871, which began so unpleasantly, ended in a more satisfactory manner. The increase of the war-budget was passed, the Minister of War receiving valuable support from Lonyay, the Minister of Finance for both portions of the empire, and from the Sektionschef von Hofmann. Monsignor Greuter's attack on me on the subject of the occupation of Rome enabled me to gain an easy victory on that point, and brought about the beginning of a change of opinion in the Liberal party which soon became more perceptible. The conclusion of my speech on the war-budget was extremely well received. I insert it here as it plainly expresses the policy of the government:

'If we undertook nothing to prevent the new formation of Germany; if we gave it a friendly welcome; if we were desirous of arranging our relations with another neighbouring Power in the most conciliatory spirit, with a view to preserving our interests; and if, finally, we showed ourselves full of friendship and of consideration to a third power, even at the risk of wounding many estimable feelings in our own country: we wish everyone plainly to understand that we have all the more reason to expect that we shall not be interfered with in our own country, and that we are determined to defend its interests to the last.

'I think, gentlemen, without giving way to extreme optimism, that it is a valuable result of recent events that this state of things, and the policy based upon it, are equally recognised in both portions of the empire, and that a unanimous feeling of patriotism is consequently maturing among all its populations.'

Kuranda spoke twice: first on the Budget of Foreign Affairs, and then on that of War. In the first speech he had the courage to remind his colleagues of the Liberal party of the benefits conferred by France on European freedom at various times, although at that time it was the fashion to speak of France with contempt.

'I need hardly remind this Assembly,' he said, 'that what was done in France in 1789, was equivalent to a political redemption of Europe; I need not point out that Germany, the country of thinkers and strong

characters, in spite of her achievements in the wars of liberation, was in danger of sinking into political torpor through the machinations of her rulers; that the Holy Alliance, the Karlsbad resolutions, and the Congresses of Troppau and Laibach, lulled Europe into an apathy dangerous to national dignity, but that she was roused from her somnolence by the deeds of France, which offered a noble example to all other countries—flashes of lightning that rekindled the dormant spirit of national freedom.'

The speaker might with justice have added that without the February Revolution no representative Assembly would have met in the 'Paulskirche' in Frankfort, and that no 'National Verein' would have been constituted or German empire founded. As for the French themselves, they had to pay heavily for the benefits they conferred upon mankind; and, indeed, so had Austria.

The second time that Kuranda spoke was when he attacked a speech which, having been delivered when and where it was, necessarily failed to produce the effect at which it aimed, and against which I myself was compelled to protest, though it was in many respects a very remarkable one. The speaker was Julian Klaczko, whom I have previously mentioned. He spoke without hesitation for more than half-an-hour in the German language, which he understood thoroughly, but often had not had occasion to speak for many years. His speech may be said to have cast a glance at the past, at the present, and at

the future. The first was full of anger to Prussia, and of reproach to Austria for her weakness and forgetfulness of the injuries she had suffered; the second was cheering to France and cold to Europe; while the third was prophetic of the Commune, which came soon after, and of the Franco-Russian Alliance, which is yet to come. To the second part of his speech I replied that the constant recollection of injuries has never yet borne good fruit, and that in that very country whose fate the speaker and many others justly lamented, the words: 'Revanche pour Waterloo' have been incessantly repeated for half-a-century with the result which we now see.

Klaczko said well and truly:

'France has taught Europe much by her revolutions, and her present misfortunes should be a further lesson to her, for they show what is the result when a great nation loses the support of a royal dynasty which has ruled over it for centuries.

'A hereditary sovereign can return to his people even after a defeat, and they will receive him with sympathy instead of reproaches. A father who has lost everything can honestly say so to his children; they will soon be reconciled to him, and will lament the common ruin without condemning the author of it. But a man who is a sovereign only by accident is like the director of a joint stock company; if he does a good business, he is praised; if bad, he runs away.

'I look forward with confidence to the future of Austria, because we have that which is wanting in

France: we have an Emperor and King to whom we are faithfully devoted; and however divided we may be in politics and language, we are united in our loyalty to the sovereign. In Austria there are no revolutionary elements, and her enemies would do well to bear that fact in mind.'

His speech ended with a quotation which is not so pleasant to hear, but which is none the less true:

'Thugut wrote as follows to Colloredo at the time of the Peace of Campo Formio, when Austria lost comparatively less than France is now losing:

'"My despair is enhanced by the shameful degradation of the Viennese, who go into ecstacies of joy at the sound of the word 'peace,' without caring whether peace is secured on favourable or unfavourable terms. Nobody cares about the honour of the empire, or what will become of it eighty years hence, so long as one can go to balls and eat dainties."'

In the year 1879, when the silver wedding of the Emperor and Empress was celebrated, and the newspapers gave such magnificent accounts of the homage paid to their Majesties, I was Ambassador in Paris. I often heard the words: 'Que vous êtes heureux d'avoir des populations attachées à leur Souverain et avec de sentiments vraiment dynastiques!' Of course I cordially agreed; but to my more intimate French acquaintances I could not help saying: 'Ce que vous dites est parfaitement juste, toutes ces démonstrations sont vraies et sincères et répondent à un sentiment profondément dynastique; seulement je ne saurais

oublier que peu de semaines après Sadowa la municipalité de Vienne est venue supplier l'Empereur de faire la paix. Vous pouvez mettre le siège de Paris à votre actif.'

The part of Klaczko's speech which was directed against the indifference and prostration of Europe gave Kuranda an opportunity for a vigorous reply. He justly cited in opposition to Klaczko's view the historical fact that it was the policy of France under Napoleon which had dissolved the Pentarchy, thereby bringing about the dismemberment of Europe; and that it was the French Government which had created the system of localised wars, for which France herself was now paying the penalty. 'The localisation of a war,' said Kuranda 'is nothing else than the removal of a solitary opponent from the collective protection of Europe in order to crush him altogether; and France has attempted to enforce this localisation against ourselves in particular. When she waged war against us in Italy, she managed to localise it; now Prussia has learnt to do the same towards France.'

The revival by Klaczko of the memory of the mediation of France in favour of Austria in 1866 gave another eminent speaker, Dr Giskra, an opportunity of saying a few words in reply which deserve to be quoted. They were as follows:—

'In my humble position as Burgomaster of Brünn, I was one day honoured, during the occupation of that town by the Prussian troops, by being summoned to an interview with the Prussian Minister of Foreign

Affairs. At this interview I was requested to proceed to Vienna to represent the necessity of peace in the interest of the town of which I was the chief magistrate, and if possible to open the way for peace negotiations. . . . . Count Bismarck declared himself ready to conclude peace at Brünn, guaranteeing the integrity of Austrian territory, with the exception of the Venetian Provinces, which Austria had already stated she was prepared to give up, and promising that no war indemnity should be demanded, that the line of the Main should be the boundary of Prussian power in Germany, that South Germany should be independent, and that Austria should be free to enter into relations with South Germany—all this, however, on the condition that France should not be allowed to mediate for the conclusion of peace.

'Owing to my official duties, I was prevented from undertaking this mission, although I would gladly have done so in order to alleviate the sufferings of a town under foreign occupation. A confidential person recommended by me was sent to Vienna instead of myself. He was most graciously received in the highest quarters; in others, even enthusiastically; but with extreme coldness by an individual who, although not connected with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, exercised great influence on the Minister. After waiting for more than thirty hours, the envoy was dismissed with the statement that if Prussia were inclined to invite Austria formally to send a plenipotentiary for the negotiations of peace, the latter

was willing to comply; but that she was not prepared to respond to the private invitation which had been conveyed to her, as she had no wish to expose herself to the risk of the proposal being repudiated at Prussian headquarters.

'After expostulating in vain with the authorities at Vienna, the emissary hurried as fast as he could to Nikolsburg, but he arrived an hour later than the French envoy Benedetti, and received the disappointing answer: "You have arrived an hour too late. An hour earlier, the negotiations might have taken another turn; but having already accepted the intervention of France, we cannot now refuse it."'

This story has never been refuted, nay, it has even been adopted in historical works. It is easy to explain why no voice was raised against it. I myself, though present on the occasion of its delivery, could not contradict Dr Giskra, as, owing to the recent renewal of friendship with Germany, it would not have been proper for me to cast a doubt on anything calculated to call forth sympathy with Prussia. Berlin was actuated by similar motives, and France had other things to do than to refute erroneous accounts of Benedetti's mission. But I must have smiled incredulously on hearing Giskra's words, and in truth there was much that was improbable in his narrative.

I received accurate information at Vienna of everything that was going on, and I can state as a fact that the cession of a portion of Eastern Bohemia was seriously contemplated before the negotiations of

Nikolsburg, and after the occupation of Brünn. But what is most incredible in the story is the statement that the Main was to be the limit of Prussia's power in Germany, that South Germany would have been independent, and that Austria would have been at liberty to ally herself with South Germany at her discretion. This is precisely the arrangement which was proposed by Bismarck before the war, and which he asked, through Baron Gablentz, brother to the Austrian General of the same name, that I should negotiate. The fact is mentioned in the Memoirs of Baron Friesen ; and it shows that if Dr Giskra's story is correct, Prussia would have been satisfied, after the victory of Königgrätz, with the same concessions as those she demanded before that event. This is surely impossible and incredible.

I think I have done a service to the conscientious historians of the future by reviving the memory of these long-forgotten, but certainly not insignificant, debates.

The result was not unsatisfactory ; my speech in the last session of the Austrian delegation was well received, and even the Hungarian delegation passed a vote of confidence in the Government on the proposal of Count Szapary (the father of the beautiful Countess Élise Voss). I was preparing to return home contented, when I found myself placed before a new situation of affairs which I had anticipated rather than desired.

CHAPTER XXXII

1871

THE HOHENWART MINISTRY.

The winter of 1870-1871, that of the Franco-German War, was extremely severe, and was accompanied by many snow-storms. I hope, in the interest of the inhabitants of the Hungarian capital, that the management of the streets has improved since I last visited it. It was then very imperfect, and the piles of snow that were allowed to accumulate were not without danger to the carriages at night. The snow on the roofs was also allowed to remain until it was dissolved by the sun. One splendid day in February I happened to be standing near the 'Stöckel,' engaged in conversation with the Minister Banhans, when I suddenly felt a stunning blow on my head. A large block of ice had fallen from the

roof, crushing my hat. With a sort of presentiment, I entered my room, and found an order awaiting me to proceed without delay to his Majesty. I obeyed the summons, and heard from the Emperor himself the news of the appointment of a new Ministry.

I was not unaware that this event was in preparation; but I had not made inquiries as to the probable constitution of the Ministry. Want of curiosity is one of the most marked traits of my character; and in spite of the continual allegations of my enemies,* the domain of intrigue has ever been a *terra incognita* to me, and I have always felt an intense loathing for everything connected with espionage. The leaders of the Constitutional party having laid down the limits of my province, I did not feel myself called upon to intervene actively. But I never omitted, when opportunity offered, to point out to his Majesty that a Ministry similar to the 'Bürgerministerium,' but more experienced and less uncompromising, could easily be found, and I gave the names of those whom I considered the most suitable for such a Ministry. I thought of Schmerling as Premier, and I am still of opinion that he would have

* When I was appointed Ambassador in Paris in 1878, a German bookseller of that city said to Klaczko, who reported his words to me: 'It is a great misfortune that Count Beust is coming; he is an intriguer of the first water.' I replied to Klaczko: 'I must tell you an authentic historical anecdote which I beg you will repeat to that bookseller. When Napoleon became First Consul, he went to see all the Parisian monuments and historical buildings—among others the Temple, where Louis XIV was imprisoned. The concierge, an old Jacobin, thought he would make himself agreeable to the First Consul by saying, 'C'est dans ces chambres là que nous avions le Tyran.' 'Tyran? Tyran?' exclaimed Napoleon; 's'il l'avait été, il y serait encore.' And thus I too can say: 'Intrigant, intrigant! si je l'avais été, j'y serais encore!'

shown the requisite strength and resolution. But the silence with which my views were received showed me that quite a different Ministry was in contemplation.

The Emperor showed some embarrassment in informing me of his decision. He alluded to the attacks made upon me in the Reichsrath for having interfered in internal affairs, and expressed a wish to shield me against such attacks in future. His words were more gracious than explanatory; but the course of events gave me no reason for serious complaint. In the preceding chapters I have shown what the temper of the Delegations was, and how arduous were the battles I had to fight with them. Under such circumstances it is easy to understand why the Emperor thought it more than likely that I should be defeated; and his Majesty may also have remembered a statement I had frequently made, that the constitutional mechanism of the Delegation is imperfect in this respect, that a defeated Minister is always obliged to resign, having no means of appealing to the electors.

It is intelligible that under such circumstances the Emperor may have regarded my resignation as not depending on his own wishes, and that he agreed to the Hohenwart Ministry in the expectation that my successor would be less closely connected with the Constitutional party. The Hohenwart Ministry was already decided upon when, contrary to the general belief and even to my own hopes, the session of

the Delegations ended with manifestations of confidence in me. This changed the aspect of affairs, and the Emperor graciously assured me that I possessed his full confidence as Minister.

The position I would have to occupy towards the new Ministry was defined, on my return to Vienna, in the following words which I addressed to his Majesty :

'It has been doubted whether I knew of the formation of the new Ministry or not. The truth is that I knew nothing of it, as I have repeatedly stated. This, indeed, impaired the authority of my position ; but I can afford to discard that consideration, as I am assured of your Majesty's most gracious confidence. What I cannot, however, allow the public to believe is that I knew what was coming, for it would be intolerable to me to bear the reproach of having obtained millions from the Delegation, the majority of which is chiefly German, and then rewarding it by the appointment of a new Ministry opposed to its views.'

I added to these words, which were perhaps more than sincere (for they might have been interpreted as alluding to the sovereign), the remark that I could be of no use to him with the Slavs, but that I might be so with the Germans ; and the Emperor received my statement not only graciously, but in so cordial a manner that I was moved to tears on leaving the Imperial apartment.

My attitude towards the Ministry was in accord-

ance with my words. My position was an isolated one; but it was not that of a rival, much less that of an enemy; it remained that of an observer, until the Ministry took measures which I could not conscientiously tolerate. I was compelled by the state of political affairs in Europe generally to uphold, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, a programme totally opposed to that of Count Hohenwart. But his policy towards the Reichsrath was for a time so skilful and so constitutional that I found nothing to censure. Our foreign policy, however, was strictly German, while our internal policy was utterly anti-German; and naturally the German resistance to the anti-German internal policy found support in the German spirit of our foreign policy.

If I still continued to exercise my official functions *con amore*, I did not therefore indulge in illusions. I did not, however, foresee that my political end would be connected with Hohenwart's defeat, but rather with his victory. How far I was from deceiving myself, is proved by the following verses, written so early as the month of May during my short visit to Gastein, and inserted in the *Wiener Tagblatt*, after my resignation, by him to whom they were addressed:

'Siebenundsechzig, achtundsechzig Jahre hellen Glanzes,
Liessen neunundsechzig kaum den Schein verwelkten Kranzes.
Siebzig war das Jahr des bittren leidens,
Einundsiebzig wird vielleicht das Jahr des Scheidens.

'Manches, was ich hoffnungsvoll begonnen,
Ist in Nacht und Nebel mir zerronnen,
Manches mochte ich noch gern vollenden,
Mochte auch nicht gern so ruhmlos enden.

'Wohl das Lob, es ist ja längst verklungen,
Doch was mühsam ich fur Euch errungen,
Wird erkennbar Euch nur dann erst werden,
Wenn vielleicht ich nicht mehr bin auf Erden.'

CHAPTER XXXIII

1871

MY MEETING AT GASTEIN WITH PRINCE BISMARCK.

The assurances of friendship exchanged at the end of 1870 between the Governments of Austria-Hungary and Germany were ratified by both sovereigns in the course of the following year. The Emperor Francis Joseph did not allow the birthday of the Emperor William in March to pass—nor the return of the troops from France, connected as it was with the inauguration of the monument erected to the memory of Frederick William III, for many years the constant ally of the Emperor Francis—without being represented by special envoys. Adjutant-General Count Bellegarde was entrusted with the delivery of the letter of congratulation for the birthday; and the other ceremony was attended by General Baron

Gablentz. The selection of the latter was advocated by me because I knew that Baron Gablentz was very popular at Berlin, and that he was highly appreciated there notwithstanding the conflicts in which he had been engaged during his Governorship of Holstein. The Prussians are not deficient in the talent of paying compliments, but they sometimes overdo them. Thus when I said to General Schweinitz: 'Gablentz was a good choice, as he is much liked at Berlin,' the General replied; 'and also because he beat us'—a polite reminiscence of Trautenau.

On the other hand, the Emperor of Germany expressed the intention of resuming his cure at Gastein, which had been omitted since 1865, and of connecting with it a visit to the Emperor at Ischl.

Meanwhile I had entered into more intimate relations with my great colleague. The question was raised of sending Ambassadors, instead of Ministers, as hitherto, to Vienna and Berlin, and Prince Bismarck expressed the wish to Count Bellegarde that the first Austro-Hungarian Ambassador should be Count Karolyi, who had been accredited to the Court of Berlin before 1866. The German Chancellor said at the same time that he would like to meet me at Gastein.

The three weeks I passed there have left me the most pleasant recollections. We were both staying at Straubinger's Hotel, and saw each other daily. To those whom he likes Prince Bismarck is the most agreeable of companions. The originality of his ideas

is only surpassed by that of his expression of them. He has a spontaneous, and therefore pleasing, bonhomie which mitigates the asperity of his judgment. One of his favourite sayings was: 'Er ist ein recht dummer Kerl' (He is a stupid fellow), without meaning any offence to the person to whom he referred. 'What do you do when you are angry?' he once asked me; 'I suppose you do not get angry as often as I do.' 'I get angry,' was my answer, 'with the stupidity of mankind, but not with its malignity.' 'Do you not find it a great relief,' he asked, 'to smash things when you are in a passion?' 'You may be thankful,' said I, 'that you are not in my place, or you would have smashed everything in the house.' 'One day I was over there,' he said, pointing to the windows of the Emperor's apartments opposite, 'and I got into a violent rage. On leaving, I shut the door violently, and the key remained in my hand. I went to Lehndorf's room, and threw the key into the basin, which broke into a thousand pieces. "What is the matter?" he exclaimed; "are you ill?" "I was ill," I replied; "but now I am quite well again."'

He spoke a great deal of the French War and of his negotiations with Thiers and Jules Favre. 'The truce was coming to an end,' said Bismarck, 'and I said to Thiers: "Ecoutez, Monsieur Thiers, voilà une heure que je subis votre éloquence; il faut une fois en finir: je vous préviens que je ne parlerai plus français, je ne parlerai qu'allemand." "Mais, Monsieur," answered Thiers, "nous ne comprenons pas un mot

d'allemand." "C'est égal," I replied; "je ne parlerai qu'allemand." Thiers then made a magnificent speech; I listened patiently, and answered in German. He and Favre went up and down the room, wringing their hands in despair for half-an-hour; at last they yielded and did exactly what I wanted. Upon this I at once spoke French again.'

Bismarck told this story as a capital joke. He seemed to have no suspicion of the want of feeling he showed, not so much in the act itself, as in the manner in which he related it, for the two men must have suffered martyrdom in such a critical hour for their country. Success, like charity, covers a multitude of sins; but the words of the Marquis Posa in Schiller's 'Don Carlos' occurred to me:

> 'I know that you must do it; that you can do it,
> Fills my soul with shudd'ring wonderment.'

Another story was more to his credit. He was riding with the German troops to the review at Longchamps, when a man in a blouse came up to him, exclaiming: 'Tu es une fameuse canaille.' 'I might have had him imprisoned,' said Bismarck; 'but I was delighted with the man's courage.'

Two other statements which he made to me about the war were very interesting. The first was that he had opposed the acquisition of Metz, because of the disaffection of its French inhabitants, and that he only yielded in consequence of the urgent demands of the military authorities, who said that it

would make a difference of a hundred thousand men in time of peace. The other was that the siege of Paris would have had to be abandoned if Metz had held out another month.

I know that my correspondence with Rouher had been found by the Prussians in the castle of Cerny, and I mentioned the subject to Bismarck, upon which he told me without hesitation that he would have acted as I did had he been in my place.

He made me two remarkable communications as to events previous to 1866. In 1859, just before the Italian War, when he had recently been appointed Ambassador to St Petersburg, he was asked what he thought should be done, and he declared himself strongly in favour of immediate vigorous intervention on behalf of Austria, but only on the condition that the Confederation should be reorganized according to the plan which he afterwards proposed before the war of 1866, viz: the North to belong to Prussia, and the South to Austria. In 1864, after the peace with Denmark, he proposed the cession of Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia in return for a guarantee of mutual action against Italy for the reconquest of Lombardy. This seemed to me utterly incredible, if only for the reason that the Kingdom of Italy had been acknowledged by Prussia before the entrance of Bismarck into the Cabinet, and that Lombardy had been ceded to France, thus involving the Emperor Napoleon in the affair. But Bismarck's statement was confirmed by an eminent and very capable official of the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs, fully acquainted with all the events of the time. I myself had not leisure enough, during the short period that elapsed before my resignation, to investigate the Archives. But I had previously found in them proofs that already in 1865, long before the Mission of General Govone to Berlin, Bismarck was negotiating with the Italian Government, and that the Convention of Gastein was concluded although this negotiation was well-known in Vienna.

If I received highly interesting revelations from Prince Bismarck as to the past, his hints about the future were not less so. He foretold the subsequent conflict with the Church of Rome in all its details; which gave me occasion to say that this would please me in one respect, as I should then no longer hear people remark that the Catholics were better treated in Prussia than in Austria. I warned him, however, that although for the time being Austria was not governed by a strictly Catholic Ministry, she might be at a later period, and that she would then be a strong support to the Catholic opposition in Germany. Bismarck then said: 'They have treated us villainously in Rome' ('Sie haben in Rom ruchlos an uns gehandelt')—which was another favourite expression of his. Some months later, when I was no longer in Vienna, a person who was thoroughly conversant with politics told me what this so-called villainous conduct was. Bismarck was very well-disposed towards the Catholic Church immediately after the war. He

expected to find a support in the Roman Curia, and had proposed to the Pope to remove his residence from Rome to Cologne. If the Pope had had to leave Rome, as at that time appeared highly probable, there was much that was attractive in this idea. An old Archiepiscopal See, a famous cathedral, a Catholic population, an intensely Catholic aristocracy—all these were to be found at Cologne; and the garrison was to consist chiefly of Catholic soldiers. Cardinal Ledochowski was entrusted with the negotiation; but after a time it took such a shape that Bismarck thought the Curia was trying to mystify him. This was the 'villainous conduct' of which he complained.

We also spoke of the German Provinces of Austria, and Prince Bismarck strongly disclaimed any desire of acquiring these provinces for the German empire. He pointed out that Vienna and the Slav and Catholic population would only cause embarrassment and difficulty. I do not question the sincerity of these objections, but I cannot forget another circumstance in connection with this subject. 'I would rather,' Bismarck told me 'annex Holland to Germany.' When I entered some months later on my post as Ambassador in London, the new Dutch Ambassador, with whom I had formerly been acquainted, arrived at the same time. He had hitherto been Ambassador in Berlin. The first thing he told me was that Bismarck had reassured him as to the rumour that Germany wished to annex Holland, by

saying that he would greatly prefer the German Provinces of Austria.

We spoke also of Roumania, which was at that time still in a disorganised state. The conduct of Roumania had also been 'villainous;' and of course Bismarck had not forgotten the French demonstrations at Bucharest, which went so far as to threaten the residence of the Prussian Ambassador. Bismarck was at that time a great protector of Strousberg's railway undertakings. They were supported by many other eminent Prussians, but there was much hesitation in ratifying the contract made with the Roumanian Government. Bismarck was very angry at this, and declared that he would take a very simple and correct course, by invoking the power of the Suzerain, that is, demanding Turkish intervention. I had great difficulty in dissuading him from carrying out that idea.

Having thus described my social intercourse with the German Chancellor, I must refer the reader for the business part of our interviews to the report I drew up on the subject for the Emperor. But before quoting that document, I must mention two amusing incidents.

I had the honour of giving my princely colleague a dinner at the so-called 'Schweizer Hütte,' at which Sektionschef von Hofmann, Herr von Keudell, and Herr von Abeken were also present. The two latter had accompanied Bismarck to Gastein. The dinner was served in a building somewhat similar to the

'Gloriette' near Schönbrunn, on an eminence commanding an extensive view. Suddenly we perceived a private carriage on the road; it contained Count Arnim, who had recently been appointed Ambassador in Paris. I sent a messenger to invite Count Arnim to dine with us. The carriage stopped, but its occupant was not visible. At last we discovered that he had alighted, and was changing his clothes behind the carriage, although we were in morning dress. 'That is the sort of man,' said Bismarck 'with whom I have to settle questions of high State policy!' This remark, and the subsequent conversation at dinner, showed that already at that time Bismarck and Arnim were not on good terms.

One of the visitors at Gastein was a Herr Christ, who had married a niece of the Countess Meran, the widow of Archduke John. This Herr Christ was a native of Frankfort; he was very rich and very hospitable, and he had been much in Bismarck's society when the latter was envoy at the Bundestag. Herr Christ gave Bismarck a dinner at the restaurant of Hofgastein, to which I and some other Austrians were invited. Towards the end of the dinner our host said to Bismarck with a strong Frankfort accent: 'Tell me, why did you not go to Vienna in 1866?' Bismarck muttered something in a gruff tone, upon which Herr Christ added: 'You were always telling us in Frankfort that the happiest moment of your life would be when you were making your triumphal entry into Vienna'! The impression produced

on the company by these words may easily be imagined.

The following was my report to the Emperor :—

'Your Majesty graciously gave me permission to repeat in writing my verbal account of my interviews with Prince Bismarck.

'I venture respectfully to recall the fact that the idea of our meeting was started by the German Chancellor, who repeated the wish he had already expressed orally to Count Bellegarde, in his correspondence with me on the subject of the embassies, and held out the prospect of his wish being fulfilled on the occasion of his Imperial master's visit to Gastein. I mention this fact as it seems to show the sincerity of Prussia's wish to draw nearer to us, or perhaps rather the necessity she felt of doing so—which appeared to me to offer a guarantee for our interview being of some real advantage to Austria.

'I thought it possible, but not probable, that Prince Bismarck might make some overtures of political importance, and I therefore presumed to dissuade your Majesty from choosing Gastein as the place of meeting with the Emperor of Germany, and to propose Salzburg instead. I considered that, if any such overtures were made, time would be gained for reflection ; if not, that there would be no pretext for inventing a second Gastein Convention.

'What I pointed out in a former report as probable,

has come to pass: Prince Bismarck has not made any definite proposals with the view of embodying them in a treaty. Nor did I think it expedient to suggest any, quite independently of the reflection that I was not free to do so without your Majesty's permission. The considerations which I mentioned in my report of the 18th May of this year, as opposed to the conclusion of any treaty between Austria and Prussia in the period from 1866 to 1870, may be applied with equal force to the present time. Now as then, the situation does not offer adequate grounds for such a treaty. In the former period we were not able to promise, as a guarantee against future uncertain complications in the East, that we would abandon Southern Germany and take up an attitude of opposition to France. An arrangement by treaty with Prussia would under present circumstances also place us in the position sooner or later of being compelled to side with Germany in the event of a Franco-German War; and we should be dependent on factors totally beyond our control, while the eventuality of a war with Russia would not be limited to an attack made by that Power on us; thus it would be extremely difficult to obtain such stipulations as would give us the advantage of complete reciprocity. This circumstance, which assumes another, though equally important, aspect from the friendship which now exists between Berlin and St Petersburg, may be the chief cause of Prince Bismarck's reserve, which may also be prompted by the desire of allowing no doubt as to

Germany being strong enough to resist her enemies alone.

'Prince Bismarck considers it far more conducive to the interests of the German empire that a lasting connection should be formed with us, founded on mutual good-will and confidence, and on the recognition that the political interests of both countries are not opposed, and that each Power must support the other if its own interests are not thereby prejudiced.

'Thus, and not otherwise, did I myself conceive our future position towards Germany. Agreements and treaties, secret or open, have the disadvantage of alarming foreign countries, and of giving our own a vast field for party agitation. Mutual harmony would be far better served by the agreement of the Cabinets on questions as they arise. This is practically the idea which I developed in my report of the 18th May, and in my speech in the Delegation.

'It was no slight satisfaction to me that Prince Bismarck expressed at our first interview, before I had said a word, not only his entire agreement with my speech, but also with the opinions in my report as to what would be possible and desirable in present circumstances. Even the passage in which I spoke of the advantage which we might gain from the dissolution of the Turkish empire, although we could not take any part in hastening it, was repeated in the Chancellor's statement to me, and he at the same time observed that the idea of a Great Power implied its capability of expansion as a condition of its existence.

'What was even more valuable was that Prince Bismarck described the position of Prussia towards Russia in precisely the same manner as I did in my report. It is not desired at Berlin that Germany should be drawn by us into hostilities with Russia; but it is hoped that friendly relations with us will result in more freedom with regard to Russia. Here too my calculations were verified; and I could answer with all sincerity that we were in complete agreement on these points.

'We have good cause to attach no small importance to the fact that such a position is offered to us without our seeking it.

'We must not forget that this offer is made at a time when our neighbour has increased in power to a gigantic extent, when the only other European State that deserves to be called powerful has shown itself friendly to Prussia and hostile to us, and when the condition of our internal affairs might easily give Germany occasion to intervene in a hostile spirit.

'In the latter respect I must not leave unnoticed some expressions which were used by Prince Bismarck.

'The Emperor William, as I was able to state to your Majesty at Gastein, considerately hinted that he did not wish the Germans in Austria to look up to him, as this might cause difficulties; and, speaking of the dissolution of the German Diets, he said: "We Germans have been badly treated."

'Prince Bismarck expressed much regret at these words of his Imperial master, attributing them to

perfidious insinuations which were of no importance. He further said that he had pointed out to his Majesty the unseemliness of such views.

'He added, for his own part, that he could not understand why we should draw upon ourselves much greater difficulties from the discontent of the Germans, than from that of the Czechs; that he regretted such a state of affairs because he wished Austria-Hungary to be powerful, but that he had no desire to support the German opposition. He said it would be a childish policy to speculate for the acquisition of the German Provinces of Austria; he had no wish to conquer Denmark and Holland, but those countries would be a valuable acquisition, while it would be mere folly to introduce into Germany, with the Austrian Provinces, a Slav population and a Catholic opposition, as such a course would bring about the certain dissolution of the newly-formed German empire.

'It would be well for us, in spite of all these asseverations, to keep our eyes open, and to exercise unflagging vigilance. But if, as I can state positively, the Gastein interviews have inspired the Emperor William and Prince Bismarck with full confidence in us, it would be prudent in us not to betray any suspicion, and our interest imperatively demands that all the world should believe that our policy, inaugurated by the votes of December and the statements made in the Delegations, and ratified by the Gastein interviews, is seriously meant. A different course would

produce the most dangerous consequences. We would lose the increasing sympathy of Germany, force the German Government to enter on a dangerous course, revive the ambition of Russia, encourage the warlike desires of France, and restore the Prusso-Italian Alliance.

'I now come to another portion of my interview with Prince Bismarck, which, I may say, was highly satisfactory.

'I am sure that your Majesty knows my views well enough not to doubt that I recommended a policy of non-intervention in the Roman question solely because of our political position, and not because I failed to appreciate the ecclesiastical questions involved. I was convinced that if we were to show hostility to Italy, we would revive the Prusso-Italian Alliance *in optimâ formâ*. Prince Bismarck gave me full assurances on the subject without being asked to do so. He declared most emphatically that if France wished to undertake anything against Italy and were to ask what the attitude of Germany would be, she would not receive a satisfactory answer. He further said that Berlin would enforce the authority of the Government with the utmost severity in consequence of the declaration of Papal Infallibility. He added that all priests would be removed from civil positions, that the schools would be emancipated from the Church, that priests would cease to be school inspectors, and that Civil Marriages would be introduced. I replied that I should be glad enough to

hear it no longer said that the Catholics were better treated in Prussia than in Austria, but that I must earnestly warn him against going too far, as he might thereby force the opposition of the German Catholics to take up its head-quarters at Vienna, and to operate thence against Berlin.

'This shows the necessity of making no alteration in our policy towards Italy, if we wish to preserve the advantages of our present connection with Germany.

'We also spoke of the Strousberg affair in Roumania, and the International.

'Prince Bismarck said he hated the Roumanians, not because they were a nation of thieves, for which he could not find fault with them, but because they had acted "villainously" towards Prussia during the war. As Roumania had no international position, he could only deal with the Porte; he had communicated the Bucharest memorandum to the Turkish Government, and asked if Turkey would take the responsibility of it. He did not ask for an armed intervention; but if the Turkish Government would not help him, he would cause it every possible annoyance. "Au reste," he said, "je vous laisse le bon rôle, vous pouvez nous rendre service à charge de revanche."

'The secret thought of the German Chancellor may be as follows: "It is very disagreeable to us that great names should be abused to induce a number of poor people in Silesia to take part in a swindling speculation and to bring them to ruin. I shall be

grateful if you can help us; if not, I shall have to act promptly and with vigour."

'I told him our position was as follows:

'We are almost entirely unconcerned in the question. I am not aware of any complaint being made by Austrian shareholders; and an Austrian financier of some note even speculates on the decision of the Government at Bucharest being carried out. If we had wished to adopt a popular policy, it would have been easy for us to induce Prince Charles to give his sanction to the measure, to win popularity for it in Roumania, and so on. But our principal object was twofold: the preservation of Prince Charles, and the avoidance of any step calculated to cast a doubt on our agreement with the Cabinet of Berlin so long as we are not involved in complications against our will and our interests. We therefore supported Herr von Radowitz, and made no opposition in Constantinople to the step taken by Prussia, but we did not strive to prevent Prince Charles from sanctioning the measure, nor did we support the action of Prussia at Constantinople.

'Meanwhile I had informed the Roumanian agent that I was ready to mediate if his Government would request us to do so in a manner which would admit of serious negotiation, and above all if it would delay the execution of the law which had been passed by the Chamber. He wrote to Bucharest accordingly.

'Prince Bismarck said that on the whole he agreed in this course, and that he would write to the Chief

President in Silesia so that he might organise a syndicate of the shareholders which would enter into direct negotiations with the Government at Bucharest.

'With regard to the International Society, to which much importance is attached by the Cabinet of Berlin, General von Schweinitz having been repeatedly commissioned to demand an exchange of views on the subject, and the Emperor William, having drawn your Majesty's particular attention to it at Ischl—I told Prince Bismarck of my idea of forming an anti-International Society, whose action should be independent of that of the various Governments in the matter. He agreed without hesitation, and said he would gladly assist in the realisation of this idea. The Governments, on their side, would have to introduce more stringent laws against such revolutionary societies, against communistic undertakings with a criminal intent, such as arson, and against speeches in defence or glorification of Communism. Prince Bismarck recommended that a Committee should be formed to investigate this question, and to this I agreed, under the proviso that one of the subjects referred to it for consideration should be the condition of the working classes, with a view to its being ameliorated in a Constitutional manner.

'In order to gratify Prince Bismarck's wish of obtaining a material basis, at Salzburg if possible, for our understanding, I have taken steps for assembling a conference there on the first of next month, in which

Sektionschefs von Hofmann and Baron Wehli, Hofrath Wohlfert, and Hofrath Teschenberg will take part.'

CHAPTER XXXIV

1871

THE MEETING AT GASTEIN.—THE EMPEROR WILLIAM.—THE SECOND SALZBURG INTERVIEW.

The Emperor of Germany arrived at Gastein before Prince Bismarck. His reception by the visitors assembled on the 'Straubinger Platz' was enthusiastic, and many ladies presented him with bouquets. I awaited his Majesty on the terrace of the Badeschloss, and was received by him most cordially.

It was in the same Badeschloss that I had seen the Emperor William for the last time in 1865, under very different circumstances. The years in which I met the now all-powerful sovereign were full of vicissitudes — they extended from 1836 to 1871— but the manner in which he received me was always equally sympathetic. In 1877 his eightieth birthday

was celebrated. At the banquet given by the German Ambassador in London, I proposed the Emperor's health, and I said in my speech among other things that I had the privilege of appearing as a young Secretary of Legation before him when he was Prince William, as an Ambassador when he was the Prince of Prussia, as a Minister when he was the Regent and King of Prussia, and as Chancellor of the Austrian Empire when he was Emperor of Germany. 'I remember with gratitude,' I added, 'that during this long period his Majesty conferred upon me repeated signs of his favour. Still less can I forget how he received me when destiny made me an opponent of his Government; how he never denied respect to his antagonist, or consideration for him when he was defeated.' The Russian Ambassador was the only person present who could not congratulate me on my speech, owing to the very different manner in which his master had behaved to me.

During the Emperor William's stay at Gastein I had the honour of proposing his health, by order of my Imperial master, in reply to the toast given by the Emperor on the 18th of August, the birthday of the Emperor Francis Joseph. On this occasion I reminded my hearers that in the same month of August the birthday of Frederick William III used to be celebrated in the Bohemian baths.

I was repeatedly invited to dine with the Emperor, and this honour was also conferred upon me in subsequent years when I was no longer Chancellor.

My readers will perhaps be interested by the following report which I sent to the Emperor on the audience I had with the Emperor William the day after his arrival :—

'I think it my duty to give your Majesty an account of my audience of the Emperor William, which took place yesterday. His Majesty sent me word in the morning that he would be at home after one o'clock, and would then send for me. But I did not receive his message until two o'clock. It is possible that this delay was caused by business, but it is also possible that it was caused by preparations for the audience. The Emperor received me standing at the open window, so that the public witnessed the audience from the Straubinger Platz. His Majesty made a long speech on the relations between Austria and Prussia, beginning with the Seven Years' War, and ending with the Franco-German War of 1870. I need only mention a few passages of this discourse, as the Prussian view of the subject is doubtless already well known to your Majesty. Precisely the same views are to be found in the works of the Prussian historians Ranke and Sybel, and I have heard them only too often from Prussian diplomatists of the new school, such as Usedom, Brassier, Savigny, Bernstorff, and Goltz. The Emperor observed that the cause of all the misunderstandings between the two countries was to be found in the idea which was constantly entertained by Austria of depriving Prussia of the acquisi-

tions of Frederick the Great, and of reducing her to her ancient limits.

'His Majesty went on to say that from 1813 until the death of his father, owing to that sovereign's attachment to Francis I, a time of repose intervened for which Prussia had made many sacrifices. From 1840 to 1848 the liberal ideas of his brother caused much displeasure in Vienna; and after 1848, although Prussia rejected the phantom Imperial Crown offered her by the Parliament of Frankfort, she thought it her duty to take the German question in hand. The Dresden arrangements, in spite of their unpopularity in Prussia, were carried out by his brother and himself with perfect sincerity. The Emperor then spoke of the Italian War, and maintained that he had most strongly promised to Prince Windischgrätz, even before the battle of Solferino, the armed intervention of Prussia. He was very willing to allow Austria to take part in the Danish War in order to share the glory of it with her. (These words reminded me of what Prince Bismarck said to me in 1863—that Prussia would not risk a second war in the Duchies alone, but only with Austria.) His Majesty then spoke of the events of 1865 and 1866. He said that he had given his consent to the war of the latter year with a bleeding heart—after a long struggle with his Ministry, and after eight sleepless nights—because the armaments of Austria compelled him to do so. He added that Heaven had blessed the arms of Prussia, and

that he, as everybody must acknowledge, had been magnanimous: but he admitted that his generosity was also prompted by the consideration that he had no desire to provoke the intervention of France, and consequently for a European war. It was equally against his will that the last war, which he had neither desired nor foreseen, placed Prussia at the head of Germany. His Majesty finally assured me that his most ardent wish was now to arrive at a friendly understanding with Austria; he repeatedly laid stress on the fact that he knew the past could not be forgotten at once, with other things to the same effect, and added that he was delighted at the renewal of friendship between the two Powers.

'I listened to this speech in respectful silence. It would be easy for me to refute it, and I shall probably do so to Prince Bismarck, but I had no wish to wound or annoy the Emperor after he had shown such unmistakable signs of a conciliatory and placable temper. I could especially have pointed to the negotiations which had been opened with Italy so long ago as 1865, to Usedom's despatch, and to Klapka's legion. I stated, however, that my knowledge of Vienna, extending over many years, convinced me that it was quite a mistake to suppose that Austria's ruling thought was the abasement of Prussia; and I attempted to show that Austria's policy was always a defensive one. I further stated that the relations which have now been inaugurated with Germany were perfectly sincere on our part, and that Austria would

sincerely forget the past if Prussia would do the same.

'I was much interested by the opinion expressed by his Majesty that the war of 1866 was the ruin of France, "because Napoleon should have attacked us in the rear." He went on to say that in 1866 he never would believe in the neutrality of France, and that only after a long struggle did he consent to remove his forces from the Rhine Provinces. He had always been grateful to the Emperor Napoleon for his neutrality on that occasion.

'The Emperor gave me an account of all the events at Ems in 1870, but I need not repeat it here, as it tallies exactly with what is stated in the Prussian official publication on the subject. One circumstance that he mentioned, however, was new to me, and it throws great discredit on Gramont, if, indeed, Benedetti reported it faithfully. The Emperor said that on leaving Benedetti at the station at Ems, he shook hands with him cordially, saying: "Adieu, monsieur l'Ambassadeur! Vous allez à Berlin, moi j'y serai dans quelques jours; l'affaire désormais doit se traiter non entre vous et moi, mais de Gouvernement à Gouvernement."

'The following words, belonging, not to the past, but to the present, seemed to me of greater consequence. The Emperor said that he had assured your Majesty at Ischl that nobody had designs on the German Provinces of Austria But he added: "Of

course I said to your Emperor exactly what I said to the Emperor Alexander, that I wished for nothing more ardently than that the Germans in Austria, as well as in Russia, should feel contented, and should not be placed in the position of looking to us for help, thereby causing us much unpleasantness."

'I was all the more struck by these words as a similar opinion was uttered by General Schweinitz, who arrived here yesterday. I replied to the Emperor that the pacification of the Germans in Austria could be greatly aided by Germany herself; we did not wish to make the Prussian Government responsible for the agitation, but it would lose in force if the official German Press would make the Germans in Austria understand that they live in an empire of many races and tongues, and that they must be on good terms with the other nationalities if they wish that Austria should continue to exist—which has been stated to be a necessity by Germany herself. However much I may refrain from interfering in present internal policy, it still remains my duty to point out the serious aspect of these statements, and urgently to warn the government not to allow the present crisis to develop itself in a manner which may go far beyond its intentions. I assume the Cabinet of Berlin to be strictly loyal and sincere; and I must here remind your Majesty how at Vienna, where there was assuredly no anti-Danish feeling, one had to pay attention to the lamentations of the Germans, though it was evident that they were not sincere.

'The Emperor William finally spoke for a long time about the International Society and the necessity of mutual action against it, upon which I developed my idea of an anti-International Association.

'After an audience which lasted an hour and a half, I was graciously dismissed.'

The meetings of Gastein were followed by those of Salzburg.

A rumour was circulated that the Emperor Francis Joseph desired to return at Gastein the visit paid to him by the Emperor William at Ischl. In order not to leave Gastein at the wrong moment, I took the liberty of enquiring whether this rumour was true, adding that as the place named was connected with the Gastein Convention, I did not recommend it for the meeting of the two sovereigns. A reply came by telegraph to the effect that the rumour was false, and that during the following weeks his Majesty's time would be fully occupied by military inspections. Although this telegram clearly proved that his Majesty did not intend to have a further meeting with the Emperor of Germany, I ventured to represent that I considered an early return of the Ischl visit to be essential, and that Salzburg would be a suitable place for continuing the reconciliation and union of the two sovereigns. The Emperor agreed, not without hesitation, and later on I was told more than once that Salzburg was one of the nails in my coffin. In the following year the Emperor went to Berlin. Before his departure I saw the Emperor

William at Gastein, and he said to me 'The Emperor is coming to Berlin; this pleases me immensely.' I would not have been able to go to Berlin, nor would I have recommended the Emperor to do so, had I remained in office. Indeed, when proposing the Salzburg interview, I laid stress on the fact that I thought a visit to Berlin unadvisable. It seemed to me quite unnecessary that the Emperor should review at Berlin the troops that had defeated his own some years previously. I held the same opinion as to the return visit of the Emperor William, which might well have taken place on territory that had not belonged to Austria, instead of in the Austrian capital. The Emperor must have felt so too, and under the circumstances he deserved praise and admiration for having considered no sacrifice or self-denial too great in the fulfilment of his duty. A Minister should not make such proposals without extreme necessity. Certain feelings must be considered, and the result of wounding them is attended with more disadvantage than benefit. I remember with pride the last words I heard from the Archduchess Sophia at Salzburg after my resignation. 'I shall always remember that you never disregarded the Emperor's dignity.' This testimony was all the more honourable to me, as the Archduchess had often complained of my treatment of ecclesiastical questions, and had made no secret of her displeasure.

The festivities at Salzburg went off like those in 1867. Dinner and tea were served at the Burg,

there was a trip to Klesheim, and there were bonfires on the hills. I accompanied Prince Bismarck in the drive to Klesheim. I remained of course perfectly passive to the cheers of the people, leaving the honour entirely to the illustrious visitor, who acknowledged them with unusual cordiality by military salutes. He said to me: 'I have arranged things very well. In the days when people used to hiss me, I wore civilian clothes, and had no occasion to take off my hat; while now, when they cheer me, I wear a uniform, and need only touch my hat.'

Next morning both sovereigns left. 'At half-past six,' said I to Prince Bismarck 'we must be ready for the departure.' 'Indeed?' said Bismarck, who liked early rising as little as I did; 'that is soon after midnight.'

On leaving, the Emperor William said to me: 'I have rather blackened you.' He meant that he had invested me with the order of the Black Eagle,* and I am certain that his Majesty did not blacken me in any other sense, but that other people did so especially during the time of my embassy in Paris.

Prince Bismarck went to join his family at Reichenhall. I accompanied him in a postechaise drawn by four horses, and remained with him for a day. I did not see him again for six years.

* When I returned to Vienna, an old-fashioned Austrian said to me: 'Do not let the Prussians be whitewashed in your opinion.' 'On the contrary' said I, 'I have let them blacken me.' On this subject I invented the following charade: 'Qu'est ce que c'est? Autrefois je l'étais, aujourd' hui je l'ai? La bête noire.'

CHAPTER XXXV

1871

THE APPROACHING INTERNAL CRISIS.

I HAD seen little of Count Hohenwart at Salzburg, but I heard Prince Bismarck say to him on leaving: 'I wish you *bonne chance*.' My relations with Count Hohenwart had become even less harmonious than previously, which was partly owing to articles in the *Österreichische Zeitung*, a paper supported by the cis-Leithan Ministry, and representing true 'Austrianism,' *alias* Federalism. It was edited by a Dr Frese, who came from the North, and who had been a confidant of the Minister Dr Schäffle. This journal found much fault with the agreement with Germany which had been effected at Gastein and

Salzburg. I was quite indifferent to the attacks of the Ministerial paper; but they were not to be despised, as they might have led the public to doubt the sincerity of the new direction which had been given to foreign policy. Even more shrill was the voice of the *Vaterland*, a paper which, although not official, stood in the same position to the Ministry as the *Neue Freie Presse* had stood to the 'Bürgerministerium.' It said:

'Count Beust as the Chancellor of the Empire, directing foreign affairs with his Cis and Trans Leithania, his liberal centralisation, his hostility to the Church, his inspired plundering expedition to Rome, his Jewish-Liberal gang, and his panacea for a cure of the internal troubles of Austria, presents us with contrasts which do not promise a peaceful solution. The fate which he prepared for Count Belcredi and his system he probably also contemplated at Gastein for the Hohenwart Ministry.'

This journal, which was the organ rather of Schäffle than of Hohenwart, alluded now and then to the progress of the 'honest work,' meaning the negotiation which was then being carried on by the Minister of Commerce with the leaders of the National Party in Bohemia. Of all the events of those times, none remained more inexplicable to me than that Count Hohenwart, who was more intimately acquainted with the internal affairs of Austria than anybody else, should have left the conduct of this delicate negotiation to a Professor who came from a

foreign country.* How it was that the negotiation bore fruit I began to understand after having heard in the Great Council of the Crown, where the battle between Hohenwart and myself was fought, Minister Schäffle's reply to an objection raised against a particularly absurd clause of the so-called 'Fundamental Articles'—'The Bohemian nobility wish it!' But even this reply was better than that given by the Minister of Commerce to a deputy of the opposition, designating the latter's objections as 'bad jokes.'

Thanks to the 'honest work'—and so completely without my knowledge that I did not hear of it until it was published—an Imperial Rescript was issued on September 12 to the Bohemian Diet, adding to the existing Constitution the recognition of the kingdom of Bohemia as a State, the acknowledgment of the rights of that State, and the promise of a coronation oath. The Rescript further recommended that the debates on Bohemian affairs should be conducted in a spirit of moderation and conciliation, so as to enable the Crown to put an end to the Constitutional conflict without infringing the rights of the other kingdoms and territories, or the Fundamental Laws of 1861 and 1867. The Bohemian Diet showed its spirit of moderation and conciliation by presenting to the Emperor the notorious Fundamental Articles,

* Perhaps it will be objected that my intervention in the Hungarian settlement was much the same thing; but a Minister who had had seventeen years' official experience of important affairs in foreign countries, is surely more qualified to speak on such subjects than a University Professor; and, which is most important and to the point, Count Belcredi did not give up the negotiations entirely to me, but carried them out himself with my assistance.

which, had they been ratified, would have put an end to the Viennese Parliament, substituting for it merely an occasional congress of representatives of the kingdoms and territories, and conferences of the Ministers of the various portions of the empire, each of which would have possessed a government of its own.

Meanwhile, by using much pressure, it became possible in consequence of the elections to the Diets (direct general elections were not yet introduced), so to change the majority of the Lower House that the Government could count upon two-thirds of the votes. That it was willing to consider the Fundamental Articles, although of course with modifications, had become apparent in the Grand Council of the Crown above referred to which preceded the resignation of Hohenwart, as well as in the consultations of the Ministers between themselves which were held in the Foreign Office.

An idea which may be found repeated in some historical works at that time prevailed that Count Andrassy had taken the initiative of intervention, and that I joined him. This is only a *fable convenue.*

As I have mentioned above, the Chamber of Commerce of Brody returned me to the Galician Diet, and I was to take my seat at Lemberg, having been prevented in the previous year by the Franco-German War from leaving Vienna. But just as foreign affairs had prevented me from taking my seat before, so internal affairs now had the same effect. There was no need of entering into further explanations after

what I had said, and I therefore begged my electors to excuse me. Upon this Count Hohenwart came to me one morning and said that he had received the news of my decision with great astonishment, although he knew that I was not of one mind with the Ministry; and that he thought it was not compatible with my position to make a sort of demonstration against the Government. 'Nor do I,' was my reply; 'it was merely my wish to avoid a situation which would have been as unnecessary and awkward to the Ministry as to myself.' 'I must tell you then,' said Count Hohenwart, 'that Count Andrassy has told me that he agrees in the proceedings I have taken.' As soon as I was alone, I sent a telegram in cipher to Count Andrassy at Pesth, asking him whether this assertion was correct. Count Andrassy preferred to answer me in person. He began by remarking rather sharply: 'Pray leave me alone. What have I to do with the Czechs? What is Bohemia to me?' He was perfectly justified in taking this view of the question. His successor Tisza assumed and maintained the same attitude towards Taaffe's conciliatory régime; but it is not possible to be at once a spectator and a combatant. I sent him further representations, and finally commissioned Sektionschef von Hofmann to proceed to Pesth to renew them, upon which he accepted my views.

Little remains to be said as to the close of the Hohenwart era. My battle in the Council of Ministers, under the presidency of the Emperor, was

exactly the reverse of the one I had fought against Belcredi in 1867. I was then filled with admiration at the vigour of the defence; I was now amazed at its weakness. Count Hohenwart was obviously under the impression that his cause was half lost; and what must have discouraged him still more was that the Imperial Ministers * found an ally in a member of his own Ministry.

If I felt defeated after the close of the discussion on the question whether Belcredi or Beust should prevail, I now felt certain of victory; but my triumph was a Pyrrhic one.

* The Ministers for the 'common' affairs of the whole empire, *i.e.*, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of War, and the Minister of Finance.

CHAPTER XXXVI

1871

STRUCK DOWN ON THE BREACH.—CONSIDERATIONS OF HEALTH AND OTHER MATTERS.

It was not until some days had elapsed after the Crown Council that Count Hohenwart and his colleagues, with the exception of Baron Holzgethan, sent in their resignations. I remember Count Mensdorff saying to me in 1865, when he entered the Belcredi Ministry after the resignation of Schmerling's Ministry, that he was the only survivor of the old régime. The same might be said of Baron Holzgethan, although instead of entering the new Ministry, he entered the 'common' Ministry. During his short interregnum, and with his counter-signature, a second Imperial Rescript was sent to the Bohemian Diet which was very different from that

of the 12th of September. Nothing was said either of an independent position of the kingdom of Bohemia or of the coronation, but promises were made that all lawful demands should be considered. This taught the two-fold lesson that the agreement with Hungary could only be altered by an arrangement between the Reichsrath and the Hungarian Reichstag, and that the political position of the non-Hungarian kingdoms and countries had been regulated by the Fundamental Laws of the State.

The state of feeling created in the country by the change of policy rendered it necessary that this Imperial Rescript should be plainly worded so as to prevent distrust on both sides. But it was a hard necessity for the Emperor to be compelled to affix his signature twice within six weeks to documents diametrically opposed to each other. I felt it deeply, although I had no hand in the composition or the presentation of the Rescript. I also felt that the new Ministry must be strictly faithful to the Constitution, but not in a violent party spirit, if the new measures were to be attended with success; and I ventured, when the opportunity of an audience presented itself, to speak in this sense, bearing in mind the Emperor's desire that I should always express my opinions openly, even without being asked to do so. I said a man like the ex-Governor of Bohemia, General Baron Koller, would be received with confidence as Minister-President. As in the previous year, after the disappearance of the Potocki

Ministry, my words were received in significant silence. But immediately afterwards a remarkable incident occurred. On retiring from the audience, I found in the ante-chamber the Deputy Dr Rechbauer, the leader of the most advanced section of the Constitutional party. I asked him to enter, and he said to me: 'I come to tell you that we make no claim to participate in the formation of the Ministry, and that we are perfectly satisfied if only the Government is a constitutional one.'

I was soon afterwards informed of two facts: that Baron Kellersperg had been called upon to form the new Ministry, and that Count Andrassy was again at Vienna. I did not see the latter (he only came after having been appointed in my place, to tell me how painful his position was, and how difficult he found it to exchange Vienna for Pesth.) As for Baron Kellersperg, he paid me a visit, and was most friendly, much to my surprise, as our last meeting had not been so. When I said that he would not have cause to complain of the interference of the Chancellor in internal affairs, he replied that on the contrary he wished me to be invited to all the important sittings of the Ministry. I could assure him with a clear conscience that I would not interfere in internal affairs, because I saw by everything that was going on that my position of Chancellor would not last much longer; as, perhaps, Baron Kellersperg well knew when he spoke.

The day of explanation soon came. I was struck

by the fact that the same Staatsrath von Braun who had brought me the news of my unexpected appointment in 1866, now appeared with that of my dismissal. He said that 'I ought to make things easy for the Emperor'—which could only mean that I was to send in my resignation. Baron Braun alleged two reasons: that the title of 'Chancellor of the Empire' gave rise to difficulties, and that I had too many personal enemies. I never heard any other motive for my dismissal, either from the Emperor or from any other quarter. But Baron Braun told me of two remarks made by his Majesty which gratified me as a further proof of his noble spirit, and did my heart good. One was, 'Now he is popular again, and he will find his task easier,' the other, 'I should be very glad if he were appointed Ambassador; he would then still be in my service.' I presented myself next day to his Majesty, as I was requested to do. The Emperor advanced towards me most cordially, shook hands with me, and said: 'I thank you for having made things easy for me. It has cost me a severe struggle; but I must do without your further services.' This is a strictly accurate account of what was said. I think it necessary to assert this, as the most absurd rumours were circulated on the subject. The Emperor then told me to sit down, and conversed with me on various subjects; but his Majesty did not say a single word as to the cause of my dismissal, or allude to anything beyond the great question of the day. Some days afterwards, the Emperor did

me the honour of paying me a visit which lasted over half-an-hour. My opponents tried to weaken the effect of this favour by saying that the Emperor only came to my house for the purpose of getting back some documents—as if it would have been necessary for his Majesty to take the trouble of coming to me for such a purpose.

Meanwhile I had sent in my resignation, to which I received the following autograph reply:

'VIENNA, *November* 1, 1871.

'DEAR COUNT BEUST—While granting your request, founded on considerations of health, to be relieved from your duties as Chancellor of the Empire and Minister of the Imperial House and of Foreign Affairs, I express my sincerest thanks to you for the persistent and unselfish devotion with which you have fulfilled those duties, and I shall never forget the services you performed, during the five eventful years of your tenure of office, to me, my House, and the State.

'FRANCIS JOSEPH.'

At the same time I was appointed a life-member of the Upper House and Ambassador in London.

CHAPTER XXXVII

1871

PUBLIC FEELING ON MY RESIGNATION.

In itself the change in my career was to me neither unforeseen nor alarming. A year earlier I wrote to a friend in Saxony: 'The day of my fall will be the day of my deliverance;' and a few weeks before it came to pass, I said to Staatsrath von Braun, who had always been my friend, that I would like eventually to be appointed an ambassador, for which I had many urgent reasons, independently of personal inclination. Prince Metternich—'si licet parva componere magnis,' or rather 'si licet magna componere parvis'—survived his Chancellorship, but after his resignation he went abroad, only returning to Austria four years later. Thus the best solution was a re-

moval into a foreign country in a high position, and an ambassador is looked upon as a representative of his sovereign.

As I have said, the idea of my retirement was familiar to me; but when it came it gave me pain for two reasons. I had, indeed, perceived the moment approaching when I could no longer retain office under Hohenwart, but then it was more a question of an unavoidable withdrawal from an untenable position. But now, when that position had itself disappeared; when, after years of efforts, struggles, and cares, in internal as well as in foreign policy, a firm footing had been gained on which it was only necessary to act with calmness; when things began to work smoothly; when complete harmony had been established between the various Ministries of the Empire; when I had obtained unanimous votes of confidence from the Parliamentary Bodies to which I was responsible; when I was receiving demonstrations of public confidence from all quarters—to be compelled at such a moment to withdraw from the scene of my activity, was like being struck by a thunderbolt from a cloudless sky. But I was affected even more painfully by the secresy with which the matter was carried out. Most gladly, most willingly would I have resigned, had appeals been made to my loyalty, and had I been told that the simultaneous resignation of Hohenwart and myself would offer a convenient means of escape from the unpleasant position in which the crown was placed

by the contradictory character of the two Imperial Rescripts.

Considering the circumstances under which my dismissal took place, it will be understood that it took others more by surprise than myself. It pleases me to remember that this surprise was expressed to me in a way as sympathetic as it was honourable. I was even obliged to moderate the zeal of my friends, and to dissuade the students of Vienna from giving me an ovation in the form of a torch-light procession. How rapidly has the breeze of oblivion, so prevalent in dear Vienna, blown away all remembrance of those days! If I recall them, it is not because I complain of the forgetfulness of my countrymen, or because I hope to make withered garlands green again. I only wish to do justice to historical truth, here as elsewhere.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

1883

DONEC ERIS FELIX, MULTOS NUMERABIS AMICOS.

At the present moment, when I am writing the epilogue to the recollections of my Viennese Ministry, twelve years have elapsed since I received manifestations of praise for my five years' career and of regret for my sudden retirement. In an age like the present, so full of events and changes, men live rapidly and soon forget, and I can be neither surprised nor grieved that people now think little or not at all of what was then spoken, written, and printed. But what made an unpleasant impression upon me, though my heart was not embittered by it, was that even in less than a few years I was forgotten.

I have more than once said jokingly to my friends that within the three weeks from the end of October

to the middle of November 1871, three scenes succeeded each other as they might have done on the stage.

First scene: Beust is victorious, Hohenwart is defeated; long live Beust!'

Second scene: What? Beust has fallen too? Alas! alas! What is to become of us?

Third scene: How now? We are in office, and we are rid of Beust! Hurrah!

This is rather strongly put, but it is historically accurate.

In short, it was believed that my loss would be irreparable; but as soon as this was proved not to be the case, enthusiasm and alarm both vanished at the same time.

I entertain the hope that the conscientious and unbiassed historians of the future, when judging my Austrian administration, will show themselves as moderate as I myself have been, and will find the true medium between an ephemeral apotheosis and an equally ephemeral condemnation.

'Peace to his ashes and justice to his memory'—these are the words I have chosen for my epitaph. May the appeal they make to future generations not have been made in vain.

PART III

PART III—1871-1882

LONDON AND PARIS

CHAPTER XXXIX

1871-1873

ARRIVAL IN LONDON.—FOGS BUT NO 'SPLEEN.'—'OLD ENGLAND FOR EVER!'—LORD GRANVILLE.—THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS.—COUNT BERNSTORFF AND COUNT MÜNSTER.—THE COURT.—THE QUEEN.—THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES.—THE DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE.

It was a dark and bleak day in November when I left Vienna; I arrived in London in a dense fog. That I did not fall a victim to 'spleen' was owing to the circumstance that I was not a stranger, and that I had long before experienced the sympathetic attraction exercised on foreigners by England, in spite of its dearth of amusement and distraction. The seven years of my London embassy, with the more than

kind reception I experienced from all quarters, could only confirm me in this feeling. I had a faithful remembrance of Old England, and continued to take a lively interest in her destiny; and I could not turn away from her when adversity and trouble darkened her horizon. I must even say that I could not perceive without indignation how England's difficulties produced in Austria, especially in the Liberal Press, a feeling rather of malicious joy than of indifference. As people turned their backs on Russia when she was debilitated by the Crimean War, so they ignored England when she met with disasters in Asia and Egypt. Such conduct might be understood with regard to Russia, the representative of Absolutism; but how was it possible to forget so soon and so completely that England had long been a refuge for political exiles, and that at the time of the Holy Alliance her independent position was no slight hindrance to the despotic governments of the Continent? Yet both Liberals and Conservatives in Austria no longer remembered that Europe would not have defeated Napoleon I, in spite of the Russian winter and of German enthusiasm and energy, had it not been for English subsidies and the victories of England in Spain. At the same time it is only right to add that if there was a country in the world that owed England a grudge, that country was Austria. The loss of her Italian Provinces was probably due even more to England than to France. Germany, however, was in a very

different position. How much Germany owes to England will have been seen from my remarks on the Franco-German War and on the violation of the Treaty of Paris.

My affection for England does not waver because of her present weakness, and I do not doubt that she will recover her former strength if she will only learn from experience, as may well be expected from the practical sense of her people, and give up the bad habit of treating others according as they are successful or the reverse. To do this will require an effort, but there will be no lack of self-sacrifice.

My good-fortune decreed that I should find an old friend in the English Minister with whom I had first to deal. We had met thirty years previously in Paris, when I was Secretary of Legation, and his father was English Ambassador. He was at that time Lord Leveson, and now Earl Granville. My intercourse with him, both socially and politically, is one of my most agreeable recollections. He was one of the few men who combine modesty with signal ability. Perhaps he was not quite free from the disadvantages which are the consequence of modesty. The inclination, excellent in itself, to be open to conviction, was the cause of Lord Granville following up his first decided protest against Russia's violation of the Treaty of Paris by a second which did not represent his own opinion, but that of Gladstone. In business he had an excellent habit which may be recommended to all Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

After each official interview he used to draw up a protocol, containing a précis of what both he and the Foreign Representative had said, and he would then submit it to his interlocutor for approval. I seldom had any objections to make to his protocols, although a slight deafness might have given rise to mistakes. After the death of the Duke of Wellington, the Queen appointed Lord Granville as his successor in the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, which gave its owner the use of Walmer Castle, a romantically situated building erected on a promontory extending far into the sea, near Deal, where the great Duke of Wellington died. At Walmer I was frequently the guest of Lord and Lady Granville.*

Gladstone was then Premier, and I saw but little of him. In later years we had many interesting conversations. Of the other Ministers, I was already acquainted with the Honourable Chichester Fortescue, afterwards Lord Carlingford. He was the husband of the Dowager Countess Waldegrave, who retained, according to English custom, the title of her first husband, and whose hospitable house, Strawberry Hill, near Twickenham, has been gratefully remembered in the first part of this work àpropos of my London mission in 1864.

* Lady Granville is very tall and handsome. I wrote in her visitors' book at Walmer:

Alors qu'un grand et noble Lord
Commande en Roi dans les cinq ports,
On voit pourquoi la noble Châtelaine
A pour elle même un port de Reine.

I found more than one friend in the Diplomatic Corps; first among these was my German colleague. In my account of the Danish Conference, I praised his abilities, which were not always appreciated by the Court of Berlin. Count Bernstorff was a great friend of mine, but he was not destined to be long my colleague, as he died in 1873. I also maintained very friendly and continuous relations with his successor. At first great surprise was caused by the nomination of Count Münster as German Ambassador in London, as he was not only a Hanoverian, but had been in the diplomatic service of the King of Hanover until the catastrophe of 1866. There was no fear that the Court of St James's would raise objections to his nomination, as traditional principle excluded all family considerations from questions of policy. But those members of the Royal Family who belonged to the House of Cambridge had a natural aversion to his appointment, although the Duke himself did not show it. All things considered, Count Münster was well qualified for his post. He was the son of the Count Münster, often mentioned in German history, who represented Hanover in London when that country still belonged to the King of England. He had been educated in England, and spoke the language like an Englishman; he was also a thorough sportsman, and he was connected with the English aristocracy by marriage. We soon became friends, and have had no cause to complain of each other.

I have a particular reason for dwelling on my satisfactory relations with the German embassy, as they are in strong contrast with the aspersions cast upon me for alleged intrigues and inspired articles in the German and Russian Press, which gave the *Standard* occasion to remark that I must have a hundred hands if I had written all that was attributed to me in Russia and Germany. I know that Count Münster himself complained of these calumnies, and wrote to Berlin to say that I ought to be left in peace.

I have also mentioned Count Brunnow, the Russian Ambassador, in my account of the Conference of 1864. Our relations were not friendly, but I was afterwards amply compensated by my pleasant intercourse with his amiable successor, Count Schouvaloff.

No less agreeable were the French Ambassadors, who succeeded each other only too rapidly, there having been no less than five in four years: the Duc de Broglie, the Comte d' Harcourt, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld-Bisaccia, the Comte de Jarnac, and the Marquis d' Harcourt. The Republic could not have sent men of more illustrious names, and they all deserved to be styled *hommes de valeur;* but it would have been of greater advantage for the relations between France and England if there had been one permanent representative. I was interested and pleased by a new acquaintance—Musurus Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador. A Turkish dignitary who

has remained at his post for thirty years is a phenomenon. I have mentioned him àpropos of the Emperor's journey to the East. He was well received by the English, and his house was made lively by the musical talents of his beautiful daughter, now the Princess Brancovano. His great mistake was that he still looked upon England as the England of the Crimean War, twenty years after that event. He was astonished at her attitude when Russia renewed her aggressive policy; nor could he understand that of Austria-Hungary, and he was especially angry with Count Andrassy, who, he said, should have remembered that Turkey had in former days refused to give him up to Russia.

I will conclude my account of the diplomatists in London with a few words about some of the other Ambassadors—Count Bylandt in particular, the representative of the Netherlands, and Baron Solvyns, the Belgian representative. Both are still at their posts, and whenever I go to London, I visit them first. Count Bylandt's wife, a lady of rare intelligence, is a Russian. Italy was not represented by an Ambassador until the latter part of my residence in London, when General Menabrea, whom I had formerly known and valued in Florence as my colleague, was appointed to that post. I was also not unknown at the English Court. As the representative of Saxony I had known the Queen in the happy days of her married life; as the representative of the German Confederation, I saw her in the time of her

deepest mourning and retirement after the death of the Prince Consort; and now, as the Austrian Ambassador, I saw her again when she was full of anxiety for her beloved son, as I arrived when the Prince of Wales was lying dangerously ill at Sandringham. If my readers have not forgotten my account of my visit to Osborne at the time of my German Mission, they will understand my feelings of veneration for the Queen. The words that I wrote in the visitors' book after my two days' stay at Osborne in company with his Imperial and Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Austria, in the last year of my London embassy, were no mere compliment:

'Die stolze Insel, wo der Dreizack thront.
Die hab' ich gern zum Leben mir erkoren;
Doch seit ein kleines Eiland ich bewohnt,
Hat Treue ihm mein dankend Herz geschworen.
An seinen grünen Matten hängt mein Sinn,
Hoch lebe England's grosse Königin!

I have alluded to the dangerous illness of the Prince of Wales in 1871. Public sympathy was universal and highly demonstrative. Crowds of people came to Marlborough House to ask for the latest news from Sandringham. This sympathy arose not only from the loyalty of all classes of the nation, but also from the Prince's great popularity. The Prince of Wales is one of those men, happy in themselves and the cause of happiness in others, whose nature prompts them to say and do

agreeable things; and this gave his well-known amiability the additional attractiveness of sincerity. I could not regard the kindness shown to me by his Royal Highness as a special distinction; but my grateful recollection of it remains no less vivid. The popularity of the Prince of Wales arises chiefly from the fact that he is a thorough Englishman, and from the lively interest which he takes in everything that relates to this country, an interest which he shows by presiding at banquets given for useful and charitable objects, on which occasions he speaks with remarkable ease and elegance of expression. These appearances in public are of no small advantage to the English Princes. At a dinner for the German Hospital, when the Prince of Wales was in the chair, I remarked with what a happy grace the English Princes knew how to apply the saying: 'Honi soit qui mal y pense.'

In speaking of my German mission of the year 1864, I also mentioned the equally great popularity of the Princess of Wales. In those days, when I was considered the greatest enemy of Denmark, I was not allowed to approach the Princess, but now things had changed, and from the beginning to the end of my career as Ambassador, I may say that I was always welcome at Marlborough House. When the Prince of Wales undertook his journey to India in 1876, I promised to compose a waltz in honour of his happy return. I had never before undertaken such a task, but I kept my word, and I dedicated my

first waltz, 'Return from India,' to the Princess of Wales.*

The dislike with which I was viewed at the Court of the Heir to the Throne in 1864 was even deeper among the members of another branch of the Royal Family. The Duchess of Cambridge and the Princess Mary never condescended to say a word to me; and this I found all the more painful as at the time of my Saxon mission they always welcomed me, and the Duchess herself had honoured me with a visit at Dresden. In 1867 the Duchess was in Paris when the Emperor of Austria was there, and I kept out of her way. 'The Duchess has forgiven you,' said his Majesty to me. 'That may be,' I replied; 'but I have not forgiven the Duchess.' But when I came to London as Ambassador, the past was forgotten, and I was honoured by a very sympathetic reception from the Duchess and her daughters, the Grand-Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz and the Duchess of Teck, as well as from the Duke of Cambridge. I always took great pleasure in the conversation of the Duchess of Cambridge, the interest of whose extensive reminiscences was always enhanced by the wit with which she related them. During the latter period of my London mission I could not help admiring this intellectual vivacity in her Royal Highness, who was over eighty years of age.

* This waltz was performed at the next State Ball, and as the programme of the music of those festivities always appears in the *Morning Post*, my name was published together with those of the other composers. 'Have you seen the *Morning Post?*' asked the Princess. 'Yes,' I answered; 'I used to appear between Bismarck and Gortschakoff, and now I appear between Strauss and Waldteufel.'

CHAPTER XL

1872-1882

FURTHER RECOLLECTIONS AS AMBASSADOR.—SALZBURG AND VIENNA.—REQUIEM MASS FOR GRILLPARZER.—HUMAN IMPERFECTION.—RECOVERY OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.—THANKSGIVING.—HOLLAND HOUSE.—PRINCE LIECHTENSTEIN.—MY DEBUT AS CHAIRMAN.—DINNERS AND SPEECHES.—AN ANXIOUS MOMENT.

Before I proceed in recording the recollections of my two embassies, I must say a few words in explanation. My readers will perceive an essential difference between this part of my Memoirs and its predecessors. They will find descriptions of countries, people, and events, but few allusions to my own proceedings. This was a natural consequence of my altered position. He who has directed the course of events, or taken part in them, is bound to explain them, for it is not only his past career, but also the authority of the government to which he belonged, that is in question.

Such is not the case when the writer of Memoirs has held a subordinate post more or less executive and limited in scope. A subordinate has to exercise discretion which restricts the freedom of his narrative.

The Emperor graciously complied with a request I made on accepting my post in London, to the effect that I might be allowed to pass with my family the two dead months of the year, both as regards business and society, which in London occur after the season and at Christmas, as the health of my wife did not allow her to undertake the very trying duties of London life. Thus I was enabled, as soon as I had presented my credentials, to take my winter holidays, and to proceed to Salzburg, where I had settled my family after the eventful days of November.

From Salzburg I went to Vienna, where I stayed at the 'Römische Kaiser,' the hotel at which I resided in 1866. With what different feelings did I enter it now! The poet Grillparzer was just dead, and I was invited to be present at the Requiem Mass in the 'Michaelerkirche.' The seats were all taken, and I recognised many faces; but nobody showed the slightest inclination to make way for me, so that during the ceremony I was standing all the time.

But this indifference was not without its compensations. I soon afterwards made a tour in the north of Italy with my wife and son, and when I reached the first Austrian station on my return, I found the Governor of the Tyrol there to receive me. It was Count Taaffe, who had come from Innsbruck

expressly for the purpose. I have never forgotten that kindly act.

A year later I was Lord Carnarvon's guest at his magnificent country-seat, Highclere. One day, as we were taking a walk, we entered a simple little village church, in which, however, there was a very handsome tomb with this inscription: 'He was an honest man as far as is consistent with human imperfection.' This original epitaph remained in my memory and was of use to me. Fidelity may also be measured by human imperfection, and that thought helps one to bear many a bitter experience.

On my return, I found London preparing for the great 'Thanksgiving,' a ceremony performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury in St Paul's on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's recovery, in the presence of the Queen, the Royal Family, and the members of Parliament and the Diplomatic Corps—a ceremony whose national and sincerely loyal character was shown by the densely crowded streets.

Some months later I witnessed an extraordinary ceremony of a different kind. The Dowager Lady Holland, owner of Holland House, so full of recollections of Fox, celebrated the marriage of her adopted daughter to Prince Aloys Liechtenstein. The wedding took place in the Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral in Kensington, and the Prince and Princess of Wales witnessed it. This was the first time since the days of James the Second that an English Prince was present at Mass in England. Lord Granville

said to me when the ceremony was over: 'I had my eyes on you to see how a good Protestant should behave.' Unusual and remarkable as the event was, it was not noticed in the newspapers. Gladstone, who was not present, said to me when I expressed my surprise at his absence: 'If I had come, you may be sure there would have been an outcry.'

One of my 'incorrect proceedings,' by which I emancipated myself from the tradition of my predecessors, was my frequent attendance in England at public charity dinners, at which I not only spoke, but sometimes presided; this I did quite at the beginning of my mission. If my so doing has exposed me to attacks, for reasons too trivial to mention, I have, on the other hand, been praised and thanked, and not I think undeservedly; for my presence, as I shall immediately show, contributed in no small measure to the success of the charitable associations whose dinners I attended—especially of those whose prosperity benefited my necessitous countrymen. I need scarcely add that I did not volunteer to speak at these gatherings, as it would have been the height of presumption for me to do so, having rarely had the opportunity of speaking English, even in conversation. I was not quite a novice, for a sympathetic envoy of the United States at Vienna, Mr Jay, gave two banquets annually in his house, the one on the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and the other on Washington's birthday, at which the Chancellor of the Empire had to be present and

to reply. 'Jay has trained you,' said Lady Bloomfield, the wife of the English Ambassador at Vienna, to me in London. But the chief merit of my oratorical achievements belongs to my friend Baron Henry de Worms, M.P. He spoke both German and English equally well, and he greatly improved my speeches. I may add that I had not only a tenacious, but also a capacious memory, which rapidly assimilated new words and phrases, so that I learned a speech by heart with great ease.

I had no sooner arrived in London than I was invited to the annual dinner of the German Hospital, on which occasion my health was proposed. In England it is still the custom to remember pleasant things which have happened in the past, a custom which has fallen into desuetude elsewhere, and it was recollected that when I was Saxon Ambassador I had taken part in the foundation of the hospital, and that when I was Chancellor I had frequently recommended it to the Austrian embassy. My reply was well received, and I soon after had the opportunity of speaking before an even more illustrious audience. King Leopold of the Belgians was in the chair at the dinner of the Literary Fund, and on either side of him were the Duke of Edinburgh and the Duke of Connaught. I had the honour of supporting the Royal chairman.

My speeches were reported in the papers, and the Society of the Friends of Foreigners in Distress next applied to me to take the chair at their annual dinner.

While fully appreciating their courtesy, I was not unaware that the chief motive of their application was that they thought my being in the chair might act as a stimulus on the subscriptions. I did not of course dissent from this view; and as the object of the charity was an excellent one, I readily gave my consent. Everything that is worth seeing is sure to bring a large number of spectators in England, and an ex-Chancellor of the Austrian empire, who had been so much talked about in the newspapers, was an attraction. The amount subscribed at the dinner was nearly £4000, and although that sum included the annual donations, it was greatly above the average. In such matters diplomacy in England finds a wide and grateful sphere of activity, and I never refused to give my services on occasions of this kind. Soon after the above dinner, at which I had to speak six times, I was invited by a German Society, including some Austrians, to preside over a banquet at the Crystal Palace, and the result was much more satisfactory than it had ever been before. This fête illustrated what Prince Bismarck, in his great speech on the Polish Question, recently described as a great fault of the German nation—their tendency to sink their individuality and language in those of other nationalities. In England especially one often finds a German who, after a few years' residence, not only prefers to speak English, but attempts to speak German with an English accent, and feels offended when an Englishman addresses him in German. An Englishman, on the other

hand, holds his own language in the highest esteem, and even when he speaks French well (as is now more frequently the case than formerly), he prefers to carry on a conversation in his own language with a foreigner who may perhaps speak English less fluently than the Englishman does French. I was informed that at the meeting of the German society at which I was to preside (the Benevolent German Society), it was invariably the custom to speak English, although not a single Englishman was present. I departed, however, from the usual custom, and, after giving the toasts of the Queen and the Royal Family in English, I began my principal speech with the words: 'Geehrte Damen and Herren' This caused much surprise, but no displeasure. I earnestly impressed upon my hearers how wrong it was for a great nation that had recently performed such illustrious deeds, to be ashamed of its language. 'In Dresden,' I said, 'there is an English colony; if anybody were to propose to it to speak nothing but German, he would be laughed at.' My speech was much applauded; but its immediate effect was that one of the members of the society, a man of some eminence in the commercial world, answered me in very indifferent English. In France, too, I had frequent opportunities of observing how Germans, even after the Franco-German War, became Parisian much sooner than Italians or Spaniards, to say nothing of the English. This faculty of assimilation to other nationalities is nowhere more evident than in Austria.

In Hungary the German renounces his hereditary name, and becomes a Magyar; in Galicia he becomes a Pole. It is to be hoped that as a colonist he will keep his national individuality, otherwise it may happen in Africa that the Germans will sooner become negroes than the negroes Germans.

I also gave my assistance to a society which had hitherto been neglected by the embassy, although it was more closely connected to it than the one above referred to. This was the Hungarian Society, originally founded by the Hungarian Fugitives of 1849. Its means were so limited that, as a member said at its first dinner, which I inaugurated and which was followed by many others, people called it the 'Hungry Society.' Both my predecessor and my successor were Hungarians, but I do not think the Society will contradict me when I say that is was not at its worst when the Austrian Ambassador was a German.

Among other societies at which I often had opportunities of speaking were the Geographical Society, when my speech followed a German lecture from one of our Polar explorers; and the Anti-Slavery Society, which met at Stafford House, on which occasion I made a great hit by translating Schiller's verses:

> 'Vor dem Sclaven, wenn er die Kette bricht,
> Vor dem freien Mann erzittere nicht,'

as follows:

> 'Tremble when slaves by force may break the chain,
> Not when by thy hand freedom they regain.'

My reputation as a speaker once nearly placed me in an absurd position. I was invited to a banquet at the Royal Academy. One of the toasts on such occasions was that of the Diplomatic Corps; and I had to return thanks, as I had become the second of the Ambassadors, and the first, Musurus Pasha, seldom or never came. The dinner took place on a Saturday, and the only paper with the latest news which appears in London on a Sunday is the *Observer*. In the morning I received a visit from the Editor of the paper, Mr Dicey, with whom I was acquainted. He said: 'You are going to speak this evening; can I have a copy of your speech?' 'Yes,' I said; 'it is not long, and I have written it down.' 'Then do, please, let me make a copy of it.' I consented without hesitation. The dinner began late; there were several of the usual toasts, but not that of the Diplomatic Corps. Imagine my position! What a godsend for the comic papers, after Gladstone's 'unspeakable Turk,' to have Beust's 'unspoken speech!' I withdrew as soon as possible, and hurried away to the office of the *Observer*, which was still open, although it was past midnight. The speech was in type, but not yet printed. I succeeded after much trouble in having it withdrawn, and I went home greatly relieved. I amused some of my colleagues vastly by telling them of that 'anxious moment;' perhaps it would have amused them even more if I had found the office closed.

So I have related some of my doings after all. But I have, at least, not betrayed any secrets.

CHAPTER XLI

1883-1885

MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS ON THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

One of my London colleagues, who had been accredited to the Court of the Tuileries during the Second Empire, told me that Napoleon III once said to him: 'Un homme d'État est comme une colonne; tant qu'elle est debout, personne ne peut mesurer sa grandeur; du moment qu'elle est en bas, chacun peut le faire.' The saying is brilliant, but will scarcely bear examination, as that which is commonly called the greatness of a statesman is not like stone or bronze, but is of an elastic material, which, while the column stands, is elevated or lowered, according to circumstances, by public opinion; while as soon as the column falls, everybody is eager to

tear off a piece of it before it can be accurately measured by history.

* * * * * * *

The following are some celebrated lines by Voltaire :

> 'Qui n'a pas l' esprit de son âge,
> De son âge a tous les chagrins.'

We might say with equal justice : Qui n'a pas la conscience de sa position, n'en a que les ennuis.' This truth deserves to be recommended to those who once were in power and are so no longer. For them, as a rule, people may be divided into two classes : the malicious and the awkward : the former are to be preferred. There are some pleasing exceptions, which however as usual only confirm the rule.

Claretie gave a capital illustration of this in his recent novel : 'Monsieur le Ministre,' which contains the history of a brilliant but short-lived Ministry. The once famous and courted Minister enters a drawing-room where he sees a man turning away from him, and in that man he recognises one of his most assiduous suitors in the time of his prosperity. With a feeling of indignation which he cannot control, he says to him : 'Monsieur, lorsque j'étais au Ministère, vous étiez tous les jours dans l'antichambre.' The other replies with the greatest composure : 'Mais, Monsieur, j'y suis toujours.' I have never received such an answer, but I have often guessed it.

There is a story of Massimo d'Azeglio having noticed after his resignation that somebody had turned his back upon him, and saying to his neighbour: 'Pouvez-vous peut-être me dire quel service j'ai rendu à cet homme?'

* * * * *

Napoleon III said to me at Salzburg: 'Ma politique consiste à avoir le moins d'ennemis possible.' I have often thought to myself: 'Ma politique aurait dû consister à avoir le moins d'amis possible.'

We do not sufficiently appreciate the advantage of having enemies. An enemy is in many respects more useful than a friend. He is sincere, which a friend is not always; often, indeed, he thinks it his duty not to be so. Our enemy never disappoints us; our friend does sometimes. Our enemy is not exacting, while our friend thinks it quite natural to be so. Our enemy may possibly be grateful for benefits; our friend does not always consider it necessary to be so.

* * * * *

At the commencement of my Memoirs I stated that although it had been predicted that I would not live long, I have with few exceptions survived, often by many years, my contemporaries at school and at the university. To survive others would be well enough, if we did not also in such cases survive ourselves.

* * * * * *

On m'a souvent dit que j'avais de l'esprit. Si

seulement j'avais eu le bon esprit de ne pas faire des sottises !

* * * * *

In Schiller's 'Wallenstein's Tod,' Max Piccolomini says to his father :

> 'Hadst thou but thought more highly of mankind,
> Thou wouldst have better acted.'

Of myself I might say :

> 'Hadst thou but thought more meanly of mankind,
> They would have better used thee.'

* * * * *

While I was Ambassador in Paris, an eminent republican said of the Franco-German War and its disastrous result for France : 'Ces choses arrivent quand il se trouve là un imbécile qui s'imagine être la Providence,' to which I could not help replying : 'Mais n'oubliez pas qu'il s'était trouvé sept millions d'imbéciles pour lui confier cette mission.' I was reminded of this by the conflict between Spain and Germany about the Caroline Islands. This conflict refutes the supposition that a Republic makes war more difficult. Had Spain been a Republic, she would inevitably have become involved in a war the consequences of which would have been incalculable, as those in power would have been unable to moderate outbreaks of popular passion, and Germany would not have had any consideration for them.

Spain owes the favourable issue of that conflict entirely to her Monarchy.

* * * * *

I read a great deal in the papers just now about Vienna remaining the capital of the empire, (not merely of lower Austria), and about its being thoroughly German. But if it is the capital of the empire, it is so for all the races of the empire, not only for the Germans. One circumstance strikes me as remarkable. In former days, when one heard as much Italian and French spoken in Vienna as German, not one of the hotels had a French name. There were only such names as 'Römischer Kaiser,' 'Erzherzog Karl,' 'Stadt Frankfort,' 'Österreichischer Hof,' and 'Goldenes Lamm.' Now that we want to be thoroughly German, we have a 'Hôtel Impérial,' a 'Grand Hôtel, a 'Hôtel Royal,' and a 'Hôtel Métropole.'

And although Paris has a 'Rue de Berlin,' there is in Vienna no 'Stadt Berlin.'

* * *

More than once I have heard the remark: 'How happy you must be to find yourself of use to so many people!' Whether I have been of use to many people it is for others to decide; I only know that many people have made use of me.

* * * * *

I have often been praised for my good temper.

I cannot say whether this praise was entirely justified, but I have always thought it mere good breeding not to let others suffer from our humours and moods. Moreover, a good temper gives happiness to our friends and anxiety to our enemies, while a bad temper makes our friends unhappy and gives our enemies unspeakable pleasure.

END

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

A.

Imperial Rescript of the 6th October 1867, to Cardinal Rauscher, in reply to the Episcopal Address of the 28th September.

I have communicated to my responsible Ministry the address sent to me by the Archbishops and Bishops. I appreciate the zeal and the well-meaning views which made the Bishops consider it their duty to issue a solemn declaration, as in the years 1849 and 1861, for the preservation and protection of the Rights of the Catholic Church; but I must regret that instead of supporting the earnest endeavours of the Government in the important questions concerned, and promoting their speedy solution in a spirit of conciliation, they should have preferred to make the task of the Government more difficult by publishing an inflammatory address at a moment when, as the Bishops themselves justly observe, we are seriously in want of concord, and it is of vital importance not to increase the number of occasions of discord and complaint. I trust the Bishops will rest assured that I shall always know how to protect the Church, but I also trust that they will remember that I have duties to fulfil as a Constitutional sovereign.

B.

Despatch from Count Beust to Count Trauttmannsdorff on the Concordat.

Vienne, le 2 Juillet 1869.

Pendant les premiers temps de votre séjour à Rome vous avez pu constater à différentes reprises des dispositions plus conciliantes de la part du Saint-Siège à l'égard du Gouvernement Impérial et Royal. Quelques indices permettaient à Votre Excellence de croire que le Saint-Père, aussi bien que Ses premiers Conseillers, commençait à apprécier plus justement la situation de l'Empire austro-hongrois et les causes des dissidences fâcheuses qui s'étaient produites dans le courant de l'année 1868.

Nous avons accueilli ces symptômes avec une satisfaction sincère, et nous nous sommes efforcés de favoriser par notre attitude le développement des tendances que Votre Excellence nous signalait.

D'après vos derniers rapports cependant il se serait produit une espèce de temps d'arrêt dans l'amélioration progressive de nos relations avec le Saint-Siège. Une circonstance récente—l'incident de Linz—a surtout contribué à réveiller les anciennes susceptibilités et à susciter de nouvelles défiances à l'égard des intentions du Gouvernement Impérial et Royal.

J'ai déjà transmis à Votre Excellence les informations nécessaires pour rétablir les faits sous leur vrai jour, en ce qui concerne le cas spécial que je viens de citer. Mais je crois qu'il ne sera pas inutile, à cette occasion, de remonter plus haut et d'examiner ici, à un point de vue général, les causes de nos difficultés avec le Saint-Siège. Cet examen nous conduira peut-être à trouver le moyen, sinon

d'arriver à une entente, du moins d'aplanir quelques uns des obstacles qui s'opposent à l'établissement d'un état de choses plus satisfaisant.

Il me paraît d'abord indispensable de jeter un coup d'œil rétrospectif sur le passé si nous voulons nous rendre un compte exact des faits qui se sont accomplis de nos jours.

Vers la seconde moitié du dernier siècle il s'est produit dans tous les États civilisés une tendance manifeste à émanciper le pouvoir civil de la dépendance du pouvoir religieux. L'Autriche ne pouvait se soustraire à l'influence d'un mouvement aussi fort et aussi répandu. De là naquit le système connu généralement sous le nom de Joséphisme. Cette désignation n'est pas entièrement justifiée aux yeux de l'histoire, puisque l'Empereur Joseph n'a pas, à vrai dire, créé ce système, bien qu'il en ait été, sans contredit, le représentant le plus énergique et qu'il l'ait appliqué dans une mesure dépassant peut-être les bornes voulues. La vérité nous impose le devoir de reconnaître que ce Monarque, animé des meilleures intentions, n'a fait que se conformer, en les mettant en pratique sur une plus vaste échelle, à des principes déjà introduits dans le Gouvernement par l'illustre Impératrice Marie-Thérèse et même par le père de cette Souveraine, l'Empereur Charles VI.

L'élan fougueux du règne de Joseph II, comme il en arrive souvent des mouvements progressifs qui ne savent pas se maîtriser, fut suivi d'une sorte de réaction. Sous les Empereurs Leopold II et François I, les lois de leur prédécesseur furent considérablement adoucies dans la pratique, et ces Monarques cherchèrent à établir aussi de meilleures relations avec l'Église. Mais, en somme, ils ne laissèrent pas ébranler le principe de la tutelle de l'État sur les affaires ecclésiastiques. Ce principe répondait, en effet, trop bien à la base autocratique et bureaucratique sur laquelle le Gouvernement des États autrichiens était alors constitué, pour qu'on osât arracher cette pierre fondamentale de l'édifice.

On ne pouvait nier cependant que la législation autrichienne de cette époque ne fût en contradiction flagrante avec certains dogmes de l'Église catholique. Les difficultés causées par cet état de choses devinrent de plus en plus fâcheuses et sensibles dans la pratique, depuis l'élan imprimé aux idées catholiques dans toute l'Allemagne

à la suite du conflit de Cologne. Ce fut surtout le Chancelier d'État Prince Metternich qui proclama hautement pendant les dernières années du règne de François I et tout le règne de Ferdinard I, que les choses ne pouvaient plus marcher ainsi, et qu'il fallait tâcher de conclure la paix avec l'Église catholique sur le terrain des principes. Le Prince fit de nombreuses tenatives pour convertir à ses idées les hommes d'état placés à côté de lui à la tête des affaires, et les amener à consentir à un compromis équitable avec Rome. Mais ces efforts echouèrent toujours contre une opposition qui rencontrait dans ce temps un appui très-vif même parmi certains dignitaires de l'Église, élevés dans l'esprit du système de la tutelle exercée par l'État.

Cette importante question resta ainsi en suspens jusqu'au moment où éclata le mouvement de 1848.

Dès qu'on voulait introduire dans toutes les sphères de la vie publique le principe de la liberté d'action, il devenait impossible de laisser à l'Église catholique seule ses lisières. Avec l'établissement d'un régime constitutionnel, quel qu'il fût, devait tomber de lui-même le système de l'omnipotence de l'État vis-à-vis de l'Église.

Ce fait et le changement survenu dans l'état de choses ne furent pas méconnus par les hommes qui étaient alors au pouvoir. Lorsque l'œuvre tentée par l'Assemblée dite constituante à Kremsier eut échouée, la Charte octroyée du Mars 4 1849 qui s'ensuivit contint, en opposition à toutes les traditions reçues jusqu'a cette époque, la reconnaissance formelle du principe de la liberté de l'Église catholique.

C'est donc un fait historique incontestable que les catholiques en Autriche sont redevables au principe constitutionnel seul d'être affranchis des entraves inqiétantes qu'imposait à leurs consciences l'influence souvent fort étendue que l'État exerçait sur les affaires de l'Église. On aurait dû se souvenir de cette circonstance à Rome lorsque, dans une allocution dont nous regrettons encore l'effet, notre Constitution fut l'object d'une condamnation acrimonieuse.

Développer les germes renfermés dans la Constitution de 1849 était une tâche ardue, digne d'occuper les meilleurs esprits. On avait à choisir entre deux systèmes différents pour arriver à ce but. Il était possible :

(1) soit d'abolir les lois et ordonnances existantes qui ne s'ajustaient plus au nouvel ordre de choses, de la façon qu'elles avaient été émises, c'est-à-dire par le simple exercice du pouvoir législatif.

(2) soit de conclure avec le Saint-Siège un arrangement formel, tel qu'un Concordat donnant aux réformes projetées le caractère d'un acte synallagmatique.

Il est hors de doute que le premier de ces deux modes de procéder aurait été non seulement le plus simple mais aussi le plus conforme aux principes constitutionnels.

En effet, ceux-ci, tandis qu'ils reconnaissent un partage des pouvoirs publics entre le Monarque et les Corps représentatifs de la nation, excluent entièrement tout ingérence d'une Puissance étrangère dans les affaires qui sont du ressort de la législation intérieure.

C'est par ce motif que, dans presque tous les cas ou les Concordats ont été conclus avec Rome par des États régis dans des formes constitutionelles, les stipulations convenues ont été mises en vigueur au moyen d'ordonnances spéciales, issues de l'autorité législative agissant dans la plénitude de son indépendance. Souvent même ces ordonnances, comme les articles organiques en France, ont été rédigées dans un esprit fort différent de celui qui avait présidé aux arrangements qu'elles étaient destinées à mettre en exécution, et elles ne s'y adaptaient qu'au moyen d'une interprétation tant soit peu forcée.

Au commencement on parut reconnaître en Autriche la vérité des maximes que je viens d'énoncer. On régla d'abord par des ordonnances, dont quelques-unes sont encore à présent en vigueur, les nouvelles relations qu'il s'agissait d'établir entre l'État et l'Église ; ce ne fut qu'à mesure qu'on s'éloignait davantage de l'idée de gouverner selon les formes constitutionelles qu'il s'opéra un changement dans les vues et qu'on entra dans d'autres voies.

Il est positif qu'au moment même de la mission confiée a Monseigneur Rauscher, alors qu'il n'était qu'Evêque de Lavant, mission qui conduisit à la négociation du Concordat, le Gouvernement Impérial ne pensait pas encore à conclure une transaction d'une telle importance. Il ne songeait, à cette époque, qu'à établir une entente avec le Saint-Siège au sujet de la législation matrimoniale. Ce ne

fut que peu à peu, au fur et à mesure de longues négociations qui s'ensuivirent, qu'on en arriva à réunir la matière étendue qui forma l'objet du Concordat.

Il n'est pas dans notre intention de nous livrer ici à une critique détaillée de cet Acte. Comme toute œuvre humaine, il porte l'empreinte de l'époque où il fut conçu. En 1855 l'Autriche était un État fortement centralisé, régi par un pouvoir absolu. Une volonté unique y faisait la loi et n'était soumise qu'au contrôle exercé par les influences momentanées de la situation. On ne peut s'étonner que le Chef de la Catholicité ayant à traiter avec un Gouvernement ainsi constitué, ait cherché non seulement à procurer à ses fidèles en Autriche une position qui les mit à l'abri d'une tutelle vexatoire de la bureaucratie, mais aussi à acquérir pour l'Église tous les privilèges qui, selon les décisions du Concile de Trente, lui appartenaient de droit au sein de cet État féodal qui précisément reposait sur le principe du privilège, mais qui, dans l'État moderne, avaient perdu, depuis plus d'un siècle, leur raison d'être.

Ainsi que je l'ai fait ressortir avant, il faut toujours, pour comprendre l'origine et la portée du Concordat de 1885, se rappeler les idées de centralisation dominant alors à la suite des événements de 1848, tendances qui, à l'heure qu'il est, comptent encore de nombreux partisans *et qui a cette époque-là, dans l'espoir de consolider la centralisation par une concentration renforcée du pouvoir religieux, se prêtaient à un partage qui, loin de la fortifier, devait l'affaiblir.* C'est ainsi que s'expliquent les succès obtenus alors par la Cour de Rome. En effet, le Saint-Siège consentit bien vis-à-vis du pouvoir civil à quelques concessions qui ne manquent pas de valeur et qu'on fit sonner très-haut à Rome. De ce nombre est le droit de nomination à la plupart des hautes dignités ecclésiastiques. Mais, à côté de ces dispositions, le Concordat en contient une série d'autres, assurant aux Evêques et au Clergé en général une position exceptionelle qui les place au droit commun.

Il faut enfin remarquer que le Concordat était, en somme, loin d'être conçu dans l'esprit qui avait dicté la Constitution de 1849, et qu'il répondait plutôt à la pensée d'une religion dominante d'une

religion d'État qui est en contradiction avec toutes les idées modernes de liberté constitutionelle.

Ces défauts de la situation créée par le Concordat apparurent encore d'une manière plus éclatante à l'occasion de la loi sur les mariages publiée bientôt après. Il s'y rencontre des dispositions dont l'expérience fit ressortir des effets souvent durs et vexatoires. Aussi vit-on, dès cet instant, augmenter considérablement le mauvais effet produit déjà sur l'opinion publique en Autriche par la conclusion du Concordat.

Cet Acte, loin de pouvoir donc être considéré comme une application impartiale du principe inauguré en 1849, de l'Église libre dans l'État libre, n'a été conclu qu'à l'avantage exclusif d'une des parties et dans des conditions intimement liées à l'existence d'une certaine forme de Gouvernment en Autriche. C'est là ce qui constituait le défaut principal et la faiblesse d'une œuvre dont l'existence même devait se trouver menacée du moment où changerait la situation en vue de laquelle elle avait été créée.

Cette vérité s'est fait sentir dès le rétablissement d'une régime constitutionnel en Autriche. Déjà en 1862 et 1863 nous voyons à Rome un négociateur autrichien travaillant à obtenir des modifications essentielles au Concordat. Malheureusement, les espérances qui se rattachaient à cette négociation, entamée certainement dans un esprit de parfaite modération, n'en restaient pas moins illusoires.

Cet état de choses se traîna ainsi péniblement jusqu'aux événements de 1856, qui firent entrer dans une phase nouvelle la question des relations de l'État avec l'Église.

Il était évident aux yeux de tout vrai patriote que l'existence de l'État ne pouvait plus être assurée que si on entreprenait sa régénération complète au moyen des libertés constitutionelles les plus étendues. Favoriser le libre développement de toutes les forces vives de la nation devint, en consequence, le principe fondamental du Gouvernement.

On doit regretter que l'Episcopat autrichien et les rapports adressés au Saint-Siège n'aient pas tenu un juste compte de la force d'impulsion irrésistible qui produisait les changements survenus en Autriche. Cette erreur fit naturellement naître aussi à Rome plus

d'une appréciation erronnée. Si les organes de l'Église avaient compris qu'en face d'un changement total de système, fruit da la plus impérieuse nécessité, il ne pouvait plus être question de tenter des efforts infructueux afin de sauver des privilèges frappés de caducité, mais qu'il s'agissait de faire tourner autant que possible au profit de l'Église catholique le nouvel ordre de choses, ainsi que, par exemple le clergé belge l'avait si bien compris en acceptant la Constitution de 1831, ils n'auraient, sans doute, pas opposé aux réformes projetées cette resistance opiniâtre qui leur a fait reprocher d'être les antagonistes de l'organisation constitutionelle de la Monarchie. C'est ce reproche qui rend aujourd'hui si difficile la position du clergé et qui, au grand regret du Gouvernement Impérial et Royal, envénime des complications souvent peu importantes en elles-mêmes et concernant de simples questions de détail.

Ce qui précède explique en partie comment l'intervention du Saint-Siège a pu, malheureusement, plus d'une fois aigrir les conflits, au lieu de les apaiser. Nous ne voulons, d'ailleurs, accuser ici personne. Notre seul but est d'examiner impartialement la situation et d'introduire la sonde dans la plaie, afin de trouver, si c'est possible, un moyen de la guérir. Nous cherchons, avant tout, à concilier, et nous nous estimerions heureux si nous parvenions à rétablir, de part et d'autre, des relations sinon satisfaisantes, du moins tolérables.

Comme nous venons de le dire, le maintien du Concordat, dans le sens où il avait été conclu en 1855, était devenu pour le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal une impossibilité de la nature la plus absolue. Contre un fait aussi incontestable il est oiseux d'opposer des arguments tels que ceux auxquels on a souvent recours, tantôt en alléguant le caractère bilatéral de cette transaction, tantôt en rendant responsables de ce qui s'est passé certaines individualités parmi les hommes placés à la direction des affaires. Du moment où, par suite du rétablissement de la Constitution en Hongrie, tout ce pays, sans se mettre en opposition avec l'Episcopat, se refusait à reconnaître la validité du Concordat, il n'était plus possible de soutenir la thèse contraire dans la partie occidentale de la Monarchie où l'agitation contre le Concordat existait dans des proportions beaucoup plus intenses. Même un Ministère composé des chefs les plus

marquants du parti dit clérical ou réactionnaire aurait été tout aussi peu capable d'apporter en cela un changement à l'état de choses que les hommes actuellement au pouvoir.

Quelque douloureux qu'il puisse être pour la Cour de Rome d'entendre ces paroles, nous ne pouvons dissimuler les vérités suivantes :

Les stipulations les plus essentielles du Concordat sont devenues inexécutables en Autriche, la position privilégiée que cet Acte accordait au clergé ne peut plus lui être conservée et elle ne ferait désormais que lui nuire ; enfin, il est illusoire d'espérer que cet état de choses ne soit que passager et puisse être modifié par un changement de Ministère.

Le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal est loin de chercher la lutte avec l'Église ; il appelle, au contraire, de tous ses vœux une entente. Au milieu des difficultés dont il est assailli, son calme et son impartialité ne se sont jamais démentis. Il a donné à tous les partis des conseils de prudence et de modération, et il a toujours tenu à se réserver la possibilité d'établir à l'avenir de meilleures relations avec la Cour de Rome.

On peut trouver la preuve de ce que j'avance dans le double fait que le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal s'est soigneusement abstenu de se prononcer sur la question de la validité du Concordat dans son ensemble, et qu'il a montré une grande réserve précisément dans les questions qui ont provoqué le plus d'irritation à Rome, c'est-à-dire les réformes apportées aux lois sur le mariage et sur l'enseignement.

Si l'on admet que les circonstances, ainsi que les maximes dont elles avaient amené l'adoption, ne permettaient plus au Gouvernement de continuer à se placer au point de vue exclusif de l'État catholique, et qu'il était obligé, au contraire, de conformer sa législation au principe de l'égalité des cultes devant la loi, on doit rendre au Cabinet Impérial la justice de reconnaître qu'il s'est efforcé de ménager autant que possible les intérêts catholiques.

En ce qui concerne les lois sur le mariage, personne n'ignore qu'une fraction très-influente de nos Corps réprésentatifs s'était prononcée en faveur de l'introduction du mariage civil obligatoire.

Même beaucoup d'hommes appartenant au parti le plus imbu des idées catholiques pensaient que cette institution offrait le seul moyen de résoudre la difficulté et d'éviter des conflits avec l'Église. Cependant des autorités dont le Gouvernement croyait devoir tenir compte se prononcèrent en sens inverse, et de manière à donner la préférence au mariage civil subsidiaire.

Ce n'est pas parce qu'il partageait cette opinion que le Gouvernement se prononça pour l'adoption d'un projet de loi conçu dans le sens que je viens d'indiquer. Mais, après ce qui s'était passé, il n'en fut que plus péniblement surpris de voir l'Épiscopat commencer par des lettres pastorales et d'autres manifestations un combat qui devait malheureusement aboutir à des résultats tels que ceux que nous voyons se produire, à notre regret, dans l'incident de l'Évêque de Linz.

En ce qui concerne la loi sur l'enseignement, il faut remarquer, avant tout, que ces nouvelles dispositions législatives admettent parfaitement la création et l'existence d'écoles ayant un caractère confessionel. Le clergé catholique peut, de même que les laïques, profiter de ces dispositions et en retirer pour la foi catholique des advantages précieux. Si on jette un coup d'œil sur les résultats obtenus dans des circonstances analogues en France, en Belgique et dans les provinces rhénanes, si on considère, en outre, les ressources abondantes dont dispose l'Épiscopat en Autriche, on doit s'étonner qu'il ne se soit pas emparé de suite avec empressement des facilités qui lui sont accordées à cet égard. Elles permettraient certes à l'Église catholique de s'assurer une influence propre à la dédommager amplement de la perte qu'elle éprouve en étant privée de sa position privilégiée.

Même si on ne veut pas faire entrer en ligne de compte de semblables avantages, il n'en reste pas moins incontestable que la nouvelle législation sur l'enseignement est loin d'avoir été conçue dans un esprit systématiquement hostile à l'Église catholique. Elle précise, il est vrai, d'avantage la part qui doit revenir à l'État dans la surveillance des écoles, et elle restreint l'influence directe exercée par le clergé aux matières qui sont de son veritable ressort, c'est-à-dire l'enseignement de la religion. Mais il ne dépend que du clergé de

conserver par une attitude habile une influence considérable, principalement sur les écoles populaires. On n'a pas, en effet, enlevé entièrement à ces dernières, comme on le prétend souvent à tort, leur caractère confessionel. On a seulement assuré leur développement progressif et leur amélioration, en tenant compte avec soin de toutes les conditions d'une saine morale.

Nous croyons avoir tracé ainsi avec une exacte impartialité le tableau de ce qui s'est fait jusqu'ici. Il me reste maintenant à examiner encore une question.

Est-ce qu'une entente est possible entre le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal actuel et le Saint-Siège, lorsqu'ils sont l'un et l'autre placés à des points de vue aussi divergents, et séparés par des questions de principe aussi importantes ?

Nous n'hésitons pas à répondre par l'affirmative : toutefois, ce résultat ne saurait être atteint qu'à une première condition.

On doit avant tout se décider à Rome à ne plus regarder l'Autriche comme un pays prédestiné à servir les vues du Saint-Siège ; il faut dorénavant placer l'Empire austro-hongrois sur la même ligne que d'autres États constitutionnels modernes, et ne pas demander, par conséquent, au Gouvernement Impérial et Royal de se plier à des exigences qu'on ne songerait pas à imposer à des pays tels que la France ou la Belgique, parce qu'on sait d'avance que de pareilles, prétentions n'y recontreraient que des refus et ne feraient que compromettre inutilement le Saint-Siège.

Ce qui a pu être dans d'autres pays, sans amener pour cela de rupture avec Rome, doit aussi être possible en Autriche. Telle est la première règle fondamentale dont le Gouvernement aussi bien que la nation est résolu à ne point se départir.

Je ne disconviens pas qu'il pourra encore s'écouler quelque temps avant qu'on admette à Rome cette vérité dans une mesure suffisante pour permettre d'en retirer quelque fruit. On y aimera mieux, peut-être, tergiverser encore, se maintenir sur le terrain de certains points de droit formels et protester contre ce qu'on appelle des infractions aux engagements contractés. On peut assurément, de cette façon, prolonger la lutte et susciter maint embarras au Gouvernement Impérial et Royal. Mais, en réalité, on fera surtout ainsi un tort

immense aux intérêts de l'Église catholique dans la Monarchie austro-hongroise. On devra finir par se rendre aux leçons amères de l'expérience, et il faudra bien en revenir au point de départ que je viens d'indiquer plus haut comme le seul qui puisse être raisonnablement adopté.

Ne vaudrait-il donc pas mieux prendre dès-à-présent une dé, termination énergique et mettre ainsi le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal à même d'offrir à l'Église catholique la pleine et entière jouissance des droits et des libertés dont elle a besoin pour accomplir sa divine mission et que nul ne songerait alors à lui contester?

La Constitution de Décembre 1867, contre laquelle le Saint-Siège a levé si vivement la voix, contient toutes les dispositions qui en 1849 ont été accueillies à Rome avec une véritable joie, et qui ont été acclamées par tous les catholiques autrichiens comme une charte d'affranchissement qui les libérait du joug du Joséphinisme.

Les trois grands postulats de l'Église catholique :

1. la liberté des rapports entre les Évêques et le Saint-Siège,
2. la liberté des rapports entre les Évêques et leurs diocésains en matières de foi ; enfin,
3. la protection et la conservation des biens ecclésiastiques,

se trouvent actuellement accordés dans l'Empire austro-hongrois et entourés de garanties constitutionelles.

Si cette sémence déposée dans nos institutions n'a pas porté jusqu'ici d'aussi heureux fruits qu'on était en droit de l'espérer, il faut s'en prendre uniquement à l'influence fâcheuse de cette prévention qui fait persévérer dans une fausse voie, lorsqu'on y est engagé, par malheur, au lieu de chercher une autre et meilleure issue.

Les difficultés contre lesquelles le Concordat s'est heurté ne prouvent nullement que la liberté de l'Église catholique ne puisse pas prospérer dans notre pays. Mais je le répète, qu'on ne s'y méprenne pas, et qu'on sache bien que nous entendons parler d'une véritable liberté d'action et non pas du maintien de doctrines incompatibles avec le développement de l'État et d'une valeur qui doit désormais être assez problématique, même aux yeux de la Cour de Rome.

Se les efforts de l'Église catholique se portaient dans cette direc-

tion le Gouvernement irait avec empressement au devant de ses vœux : il considérerait comme un devoir sacré d'appuyer avec zèle l'Église dans l'accomplissement de sa tâche et d'écarter les obstacles et les préjugés qui entravent son action. Dans l'état de choses actuel le Gouvernement est, au contraire, paralysé dans ses meilleurs intentions et il doit rester spectateur d'un combat qui, quel que soit son dénouement, ne pourra jamais avoir des suites salutaires.

Un changement dans l'attitude de l'Épiscopat autrichien serait le premier pas désirable vers une amélioration de la situation. Nous croyons ne pas nous tromper en présumant que les Évêques diffèrent sous plus d'un rapport dans leurs appréciations. Nous en voyons qui appartiennent par leurs sympathies au parti de l'opposition politique et qui se laissent souvent entraîner à faire, en vertu de leur position officielle, des démarches que nous ne saurions y trouver profitables.

D'autres exaltés dans leur croyance font beaucoup de mal par leur exagération, sans qu'on puisse toutefois révoquer en doute ni la sincérité de leurs convictions ni la loyauté de leurs intentions. Avec ces deux fractions de l'Épiscopat il sera, sans doute, difficile d'arriver à un compromis. Par contre, nous avons de fortes raisons de croire que la plus grande partie des Évêques comprend maintenant qu'en persistant dans la voie d'une résistance implacable on ne saurait arriver à de bons resultats. Si l'attitude de ces Prélats ne témoigne pas encore plus ouvertement d'une pareille persuasion, c'est d'abord à cause de leur désir très-légitime de ne point devoiler les dissidences, et puis parce qu'ils craignent peut-être de s'attirer un désaveu. Nous ne croyons pas nous abuser en supposant que plusieurs Évêques s'estimeraient heureux de pouvoir abandonner avec honneur une position qui devient tous les jours moins tenable. Quelques-uns d'entre eux, et des plus éminents, sont des hommes infiniment trop éclairés pour ne pas sentir la nécessité de prendre à temps les mesures opportunes qui peuvent rendre en Autriche la paix à l'Église et prévenir les conséquences incalculables qu'entraînerait la prolongation des conflits actuels.

Si on ne veut pas à Rome fermer les yeux à l'évidence, si on ne s'y refuse pas à voir la situation sous ses vraies couleurs, on devra

s'appliquer avant tout à donner un appui efficace à la fraction modérée de l'Épiscopat autrichien.

Amener le Saint-Siège à se pénétrer de ces idées et de cette conviction doit être la tâche principale de tout bon patriote auquel les circonstances permettent de faire entendre sa voix à Rome avec quelque succès.

C'est aussi vers ce but que doivent tendre tous les efforts de Votre Excellence ; et en retraçant, comme je l'ai fait, un tableau exact de la situation, des causes qui l'ont amenée et des moyens de remédier à certains de ses maux, j'espère avoir fourni quelques données utiles.

Veuillez faire valoir auprès de Son Eminence le Cardinal-Secrétaire d'État toutes les considérations que j'ai développées, et ne négligez aucun moyen pour rendre le Saint-Père ainsi que ses principaux Conseillers accessible aux vues qui sont exposées dans la présent dépêche.

Recevez, etc.

(signé) Beust.

C.

Despatch to Prince Metternich relative to the Franco-German War.

Copie d'un dépêche au Prince de Metternich à Paris, en date Vienne, le 11 Juillet 1870.

Ma lettre du 9 vous a déjà indiqué quel est notre point de vue dans la question espagnole et le langage que vous avez à tenir à Paris. La gravité toujours croissante de la situation me fait un devoir de revenir encore aujourd'hui sur ce sujet, afin de bien préciser ma pensée et de vous mettre à même de l'interprêter.

La seule communication officielle que m'ait fait le chargé d'affaires de France est celle dont parle ma dépêche ostensible de ce jour. Je dois rendre au Duc de Gramont la justice qu'il ne réclame de nous dans cette pièce qu'un concours diplomatique sur lequel il peut entièrement compter et dont nous lui avons déjà donné des temoignages.

Mais, après s'être acquitté de cette communication, le Marquis de Cazaux a ajouté que, par suite de lettres particulières qu'il avait reçues du Duc de Gramont, il se croyait autorisé à m'entretenir 'académiquement' de la question de guerre. 'Notez bien,' a-t-il dit, 'qu'à cet égard je n'ai pas à vous parler au nom de mon Gouvernement.'

Malgré ce préambule, j'ai vu clairement que M. de Cazaux était chargé de sonder le terrain et de s'assurer si notre concours n'irait pas au-delà d'une action diplomatique dans le cas où la guerre viendrait à éclater entre la France et la Prusse. Les insinuations de M. de Cazaux trouvent d'ailleurs leur commentaire dans le lan-

gage moins ambigu qui vous a été tenu par M. Ollivier, aussi bien que par le Duc de Gramont.

Il est important qu'il n'y ait point de malentendu sur ce point entre nous et le Gouvernement français.

Je tiens surtout à ce que l'Empereur Napoléon et ses ministres ne se fassent pas l'illusion de croire qu'ils peuvent nous entraîner simplement à leur gré au-delà de ce que nous avons promis et au-delà de la limite qui nous est tracée par nos intérêts vitaux aussi bien que par notre situation matérielle.

Parler avec assurance, ainsi que l'aurait fait, selon vos rapports, le Duc de Gramont dans le conseil des ministres, du corps d'observation que nous placerions en Bohême, c'est pour le moins s'avancer bien hardiment. Rien n'autorise le Duc à compter sur une mesure pareille de notre part, et la loyauté nous impose le devoir de ne pas laisser le Gouvernement français faire entrer cette combinaison dans ses calculs.

Le seul engagement que nous avons contracté réciproquement consiste à ne pas nous entendre avec une puissance tierce à l'insu l'un de l'autre. Cet engagement, nous le tiendrons scrupuleusement, ainsi que je vous le disais dans ma lettre du 9, et la France peut, en conséquence, être parfaitement sûre que nous ne nouerons derrière son dos aucune négociation avec la Prusse ni avec une autre puissance, ce qui est pour elle, en cas de guerre, une garantie importante de sécurité. Nous nous déclarons en outre hautement les sincères amis de la France, et le concours de notre action diplomatique lui est entièrement acquis. C'est là un second point qui n'est pas à dédaigner, mais c'est à cela seul que se bornent nos engagements positifs.

Le cas de guerre a bien été discuté dans des pourparlers. Toutefois, rien n'a été arrêté, et même si on voulait donner une valeur plus réelle aux projets restés à l'état d'ébauche et qui, ne l'oublions pas, avaient pour but déclaré non les préparatifs d'une guerre, mais le maintien de la paix, ainsi qu'aux observations échangés, on ne saurait en tirer la conséquence que nous serions tenus à une démonstration armée dès qu'il convient à la France de nous le demander. Je n'ai pas besoin de vous rappeller qu'en examinant les éventualités

de guerre nous avons toujours déclaré que nous nous engagerions volontiers à entrer activement en scène si la Russie prenait le parti de la Prusse, mais que si celle-ci seule était en guerre avec la France, nous nous réservions le droit de rester neutres.

J'admettais bien et j'admets encore que telles circonstances peuvent se présenter où notre intérêt même nous commanderait de sortir d'une attitude de stricte neutralité, mais je me suis toujours positivement refusé à contracter, sous ce rapport, un engagement. J'ai revendiqué alors, comme je revendique maintenant, une entière liberté d'action pour l'empire austro-hongrois, et si j'ai maintenu avec fermeté ce point quand il s'agissait de signer un traité d'alliance, je dois moins que jamais me considérer comme ayant les mains liées aujourd'hui où un traité n'a pas été conclu.

Cette argumentation me paraît claire et irréfutable. Je ne concevrais pas que l'Empereur Napoléon ou le Duc de Gramont pût interprêter autrement ce qui s'est dit alors et nous regarder comme engagés à une démonstration armée.

Je vais d'ailleurs plus loin, et je dirai que même si nous avions promis un concours matériel en cas de geurre entre la France et la Prusse, ce n'aurait jamais été que comme le corollaire d'une politique suivie d'un commun accord. Jamais nous n'aurions songé et aucun État ne songerait jamais à se mettre vis-à-vis d'un autre dans une situation de dépendance telle qu'il dût prendre les armes uniquement selon le bon plaisir de l'autre. L'Empereur Napoléon nous a promis de venir à notre secours si nous étions attaqués par la Prusse, mais sans doute il ne se croit pas obligé d'emboiter le pas derrière nous s'il nous prend fantaisie de déclarer la guerre à la Prusse sans son assentiment.

Mais la France, alléguera-t-on, n'est pas, dans la circonstance actuelle, l'agresseur. C'est la Prusse qui provoque la guerre, si elle ne retire pas la candidature du Prince de Hohenzollern.

Ceci est un point qu'il est indispensable d'examiner. Je veux m'expliquer à cet égard avec une entière sincérité et en véritable ami de la France.

Dans tous nos pourparlers confidentiels avec le Gouvernement français nous avons toujours pris pour point de départ que nous

voulions avant tout le maintien de la paix, et que nous n'aurions recours à la guerre que si elle était nécessaire. L'est-elle dans le cas présent? Elle le deviendra peut-être, mais assurément ce sera dû en grande partie à l'attitude prise dès le principe par la France, car la candidature du Prince de Hohenzollern n'était pas un fait de nature à mener par lui-même à cette conséquence.

Que la France ne fût pas restée indifférente à cet incident, rien de plus juste. Qu'elle y vît d'abord un manque de procédé à son égard et par conséquent une atteinte à sa dignité, rien de plus naturel. Qu'elle déclare ses intérêts menacés par l'avènement d'un Prince prussien au trône d'Espagne, c'est encore là un fait contre lequel il n'y aurait rien à redire. Il y avait en ceci l'occasion d'engager une campagne diplomatique où la France avait la partie fort belle, où la Prusse et l'Espagne étaient évidemment dans leur tort, et où l'Europe aurait été toute disposée à se mettre du côté de la France et à exercer sur les deux autres puissances une pression qui aurait eu pour résultat soit de donner pacifiquement une ample satisfaction aux intérêts français, soit d'assurer au Gouvernement français un grand ascendant moral si, cette satisfaction lui étant refusée, il était contraint à prendre les armes.

Il aurait fallu exposer à l'Espagne dans un langage ferme mais mesuré quelles étaient les exigences évidentes de l'intérêt de la France. Des déclarations analogues auraient été données aux cabinets étrangers, et ceux-ci se seraient certainement empressés d'offrir à la France un concours actif pour détourner cette cause de complication.

La Prusse, sans être prise directement à partir par la France, aurait probablement cédé, et la France aurait eu tout l'honneur et le profit de cette campagne. Si, contrairement à toute attente, la Prusse persistait à ne pas faire retirer au Prince de Hohenzollern sa candidature, malgré les conseils de l'Europe, la guerre s'ouvrait dans les conditions morales les plus favorables à la France.

Le Gouvernement français ne s'est pas conformé, dès le début, au plan que je viens d'esquisser. Ses premières manifestations ne portent pas le caractère d'une action diplomatique ; elles sont bien plutôt une véritable déclaration de guerre adressée à la Prusse

en des terms qui jettent l'émotion dans toute l'Europe, et lui font croire aisément au dessin prémédité d'amener la guerre à tout prix.

Le langage public des ministres français, suivi de préparatifs de guerre immédiats, rend la retraite difficile aux Prussiens aussi bien qu'aux Espagnols, et ne facilite pas aux cabinets la tâche de s'interposer en faveur des intérêts français. Nous aimons encore à espérer que l'affaire pourra entrer dans une voie plus conforme au point de vue diplomatique, et que la France n'en obtiendra pas moins un succès éclatant.

Cependant les apparences indiquent un peu trop clairement qu'il y a désir, de la part de la France, de chercher querelle aux Prussiens et de tirer parti dans ce but du premier prétexte qui se présente. Les détails que me donnent vos rapports ne peuvent que confirmer cette appréciation, et j'avoue franchement que je vois dans la manière dont cette affaire a été entamée à Paris un motif sérieux pour ne pas sortir d'une certaine réserve.

En effet, si c'est simplement avec passion qu'on aborde à Paris de cette façon la question de la candidature Hohenzollern, cette conduite n'est pas de nature à nous inspirer de la confiance dans l'avenir et à nous donner le désir de nous embarquer sous de pareils auspices. Si ce n'est pas entraînement, il y a donc dessein préconcerté de provoquer la guerre, et ceci est contraire à tout ce dont nous étions convenus. Dans ce cas, je comprendrais encore moins que l'on comptât sur notre concours.

On trouvera peut-être à Paris ce langage sévère, mais je le crois dicté par une sincère amitié pour la France, aussi bien que par ma sollicitude pour les intérêts qui me sont confiés. Précisez bien, comme je l'ai fait, la portée de nos engagements ; assurez que nous les tiendrons, mais ne cachez pas que nous nous sentons d'autant moins portés à les dépasser que nous ne pouvons approuver la précipitation avec laquelle on pose, sans nécessité évidente et en nous prévenant si peu, la question de guerre.

D'ailleurs, en dehors de ces considérations politiques, il y a des raisons matérielles qui ne nous permettraient pas de prendre une attitude belliqueuse. Le Duc de Gramont nous a vu de trop près pour

s'y tromper. Même si nous le voulions, nous ne pourrions pas mettre aussi subitement sur pied des forces respectables.

Les sacrifices et les efforts que cela exigerait sont tels qu'il faudrait, pour les imposer au pays, des motifs bien autrement pressants que ceux qu'on pourrait invoquer aujourd'hui.

Nous n'avons jamais dissimulé le besoin impérieux que nous avons de la paix. Si la France trouve l'occasion actuelle favorable pour entrer en campagne, si elle se sent en mesure de déployer dès-à-présent toutes ses forces, nous ne pouvons en dire autant pour notre part. Ce n'est pas du jour au lendemain que nous pouvons passer ainsi à l'action, et l'opinion du pays tout entier se soulèverait contre le gouvernement s'il se jetait tête baissée dans les périls d'une guerre aussi imprévue. Il faudrait, en tout cas, que cette éventualité se présentât comme une exigence indispensable de la situation, et personne ne voudrait aujourd'hui admettre chez nous l'existence de cette exigence.

Je ne dis pas que telles éventualités ne puissent se présenter qui nous amènent à intervenir dans une lutte engagée sur une question d'influence entre la France et la Prusse ; mais à coup sûr ce n'est pas au début de la lutte qui s'engage aujourd'hui qu'on trouvera l'empire austro-hongrois disposé à y entrer. Une attitude bienveillante pour la France, la résolution de ne pas s'entendre avec une autre puissance, voilà tout ce que le gouvernement de l'Empereur peut promettre aujourd'hui, s'il ne veut pas être démenti par le sentiment général.

Pénétrez-vous bien des considérations que j'expose dans cette lettre. Je m'en remets à vous avec confiance pour les faire valoir auprès de qui de droit. Il ne faut pas qu'on s'abuse sur ce que nous voulons et surtout sur ce que nous pouvons faire. On est en train de s'engager à Paris dans une bienne grosse partie. On s'est peut-être déjà trop avancé pour reculer, et, dans ce cas, votre tâche principale doit être de veiller à ce qu'on ne se méprenne pas sur nos intentions, qui sont sincèrement amicales pour la France, mais qui restent sans doute au-dessous de ce qu'on espère sans trop de motif.

Nos services sont acquis dans une certaine mesure, mais cette

mesure ne sera pas dépassée, à moins que les évènements ne nous y portent, et nous ne songeons pas à nous précipiter dans la guerre uniquement parce que cela conviendrait à la France. Faire accepter cette situation à l'Empereur Napoléon et à ses ministres, sans provoquer leur mécontentement, voilà la difficulté qui vous attend et dont je compte sur votre zèle et votre influence personelle pour triompher. Il ne faut pas qu'un accès de mauvaise humeur contre l'Autriche prépare une de ces évolutions subites auxquelles la France nous a malheureusement un peu trop habitués.

C'est là un écueil dangereux qu'il s'agit d'éviter ; faites donc sonner aussi haut que possible la valeur de nos egagements tels qu'ils existent réellement et notre fidélité à les respecter, afin que l'Empereur Napoléon ne s'entende pas tout-à-coup à nos dépens avec une autre puissance, ce que d'ailleurs nous croyons impossible, puisque ce serait contaire aux engagements réciproques. Insistez sur la réciprocité en ce qui concerne ce point et ayez en outre les yeux bien ouverts. C'est là ma dernière et ma principale recommendation.

(signé) Beust.

D

Correspondence relative to the Franco-German War.

Copie d'une lettre particulière du Comte de Beust au Duc de Gramont, à Paris, en date de Vienne le 4 janvier 1873.

Monsieur le Duc !

La lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'adresser, en réponse à la mienne du 20 du mois passé, ne m'est parvenue que le 31, notre ambassade l'ayant retenue faute d'une occasion sûre. Je m'empresse de vous en offrir mes remercîments.

Je ne me plains pas de publications que vous avez jugées opportunes. Il est vrai qu'elles devaient nécessairement provoquer une polémique regrettable avec laquelle, dans ma position actuelle, il m'était difficile d'entrer en lutte ; aussi y suis-je resté complètement étranger. Mais comme j'ai la conviction d'avoir consciencieusement rempli mes devoirs envers mon souverain et mon pays, et que j'ai la satisfaction de vous entendre dire, comme vous le faites dans la première des lettres publiées par les journaux, que l'attitude de l'Autriche était sympathique et loyale, j'ai aussi la certitude que cet incident n'aura servi ni à compromettre les bons rapports de mon pays avec l'Allemagne, ni à refroidir les sentiments de sympathie et d'estime qu'on nous a gardés en France. Et c'est là l'essentiel.

Je ne vous dissimule pas que moi j'ai également éprouvé un sentiment de surprise. C'est que je n'ai pu m'empêcher de me souvenir de la visite que vous avez bien voulu me faire à Londres. Nous avons beaucoup causé des évènements de 1870, et vous m'avez dit sans réserve que vous aviez compris notre manière d'agir, et vous ne

m'en faites pas de reproches; mais convenez que vous en mettez, involontairement sans doute, dans la bouche de ceux qui vous entendent. Et le reproche est-il permis? Positivement non.

Permettez-moi d'abord de vous faire observer que les paroles soulignées dans votre première lettre, et qui se retrouvent dans une des miennes écrites après la déclaration de guerre, ne pouvaient être un argument contre ce que Monsieur le Président de la Republique se souvient avoir entendu à Vienne, puisque ce passage de sa déposition se rapporte clairement à l'époquex où nous avions l'honneur de vous y voir comme Ambassadeur. Voilà pourquoi, Monsieur le Duc, je vous ai demandé aussitôt la date du document auquel vous faisez allusion, car il était impossible qu'il appartînt au temps de votre ambassade. Il est cependant très-essentiel de relever les dates, car si vous aviez été, comme Ambassadeur à Vienne, autorisé à tenir, comme vous le dites, ce même langage à votre gouvernement, il s'ensuivrait que nous aurions encouragé la France à faire la guerre, tandis que c'est le contraire que nous avons fait.

Je vois par une seconde lettre, publiée par les journaux, que vous appelez l'attention sur le mot 'répéter,' qui prouverait qu'un langage identique avait été tenu antérieurement par le Prince de Metternich. Je vous en demande pardon; mais n'est-ce pas un peu jouer sur les mots? Il me serait permis d'objecter que le mot répéter ne s'emploie pas seulement dans le sens de la redite, mais encore, et surtout en termes de diplomatie, pour engager quelqu'un à dire à un tiers ce qu'on dit à lui-même.

Rien ensuite ne prouverait, en admettant même votre interprétation, que la même chose ait été dite antérieurement à la déclaration de guerre. Mais je n'ai besoin d'aucune subtilité. Puisque vous dites que le Prince de Metternich, fidèle à ses instructions, n'a jamais tenu un autre langage, je prends la liberté de vous envoyer ci-joint copie d'une dépêche qui lui fut adressée dans le moment décisif, et je suis bien sûr que notre ambassadeur, fidèle à ses instructions, n'a pas oublié d'y conformer son langage.

Maintenant passons succinctement en revue ce qui est intervenu entre les deux gouvernements.

Vous me rappelez une négociation de ces années 1869 et 1870

D'abord, ce que vous avez en vue n'appartient pas—voilà ce qu'il est encore important de constater—à 1869 et 1870, mais à 1868 et 1869. Ensuite, je ne crois pas que le mot de négociation y soit applicable. Une négociation aurait été confiée aux ambassades. Il y a eu des échanges d'idées et de projets, et vous voudrez bien vous rappeler que c'était à ma demande que je fus autorisé à vous en donner connaissance lors de votre entrée au ministère. Cette correspondance, revêtue d'un caractère tout privé, fut terminée en 1869 sans avoir abouti; il n'y a eu absolument rien de signé; mais, comme vous avez dû vous en convaincre par sa lecture, trois points la caractérisaient. L'entente avait un caractère défensif et un but pacifique; il devait y avoir dans toutes les questions diplomatiques une politique commune, et l'Autriche se réservait de déclarer sa neutralité dans le cas où la France se verrait forcée de faire la guerre.

Vous conviendrez que nous nous sommes conformés au troisième point, et ce n'est pas nous qui avons dévié des deux autres. Mais, je le répète, rien n'a été conclu, ce qui est peut-être regrettable; car si on avait signé, la nécessité de nous faire intervenir dans l'action diplomatique aurait, j'aime à le croire, certainement empêché la guerre.

Le seul engagement qui en soit resulté, sans toutefois avoir jamais été revêtu de la forme d'un traité, consistait dans une promesse réciproque de ne pas s'entendre avec une troisième puissance à l'insu l'un de l'autre.

Vous verrez par l'annexe déjà citée, portant la date du 11 juillet 1870, que nous nous sommes souvenus de cet engagement, qu'il n'en existait pas d'autre, mais que nous nous sommes plu à l'interpréter dans son application large, en promettant le concours de notre action diplomatique.

Or, le passage que vous avez cité prend expressément pour point de départ 'la fidélité à nos engagements,' et c'est en se rappelant ceux-ci tels que je viens de les préciser qu'il faut apprécier la portée réelle des deux lettres dont vous avez fait mention.

Je ne sais à quoi se rapportent vos paroles lorsqu'enfin vous rappelez la négociation d'un traité d'alliance défensive et offensive contre la Prusse, qui aurait été négocié entre la France et l'Autriche

depuis plusieurs mois;—ce que je sais, c'est que la proposition nous en a été seulement fait après la déclaration de la guerre, et que, pour des raisons qu'il est inutile de rappeler, nous l'avons déclinée sans hésitation et bien avant que les hostilités eussent commencé.

C'est parce que nous nous trouvions dans cette impérieuse necessité, que nous nous sommes efforcés à rendre notre neutralité acceptable à la France sans que pour cela on ait pu conclure que nous lui offrions notre intervention armée.

Il est donc clairement établi que lorsque la France a déclaré la guerre, pas un mot n'avait été dit ni écrit qui eût autorisé à compter sur le concours militaire de l'Autriche; et en conscience, Monsieur le Duc, la guerre une fois déclarée, ces lettres du 21 juillet vous ont elles sérieusement fait penser alors que vous pouviez mettre en ligne de compte une intervention de l'Autriche à main armée?—Vous êtes resté aux affaires plusieurs semaines encore pendant que les évènements de la guerre se sont rapidement succédés, et veuillez donc me citer un télégramme ou une dépêche partie pour Vienne pour rappeler à l'Autriche ses engagements et pour hâter ses opérations militaires.

Assurément, Monsieur le Duc, telle n'a pas été alors votre pensée ainsi que l'a fait votre successeur Monsieur le Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, qui se trouvait au courant de tout ce qui avait été dit et écrit, et qui avait parfaitement jugé à Vienne la situation du premier coup d'œil, vous avez reconnu qu'il n'y avait à attendre de l'Autriche qu'une action bienveillante auprès des neutres, et à cette tâche-là nous n'avons point failli.

Agréez etc. etc.

(signé) Beust.

À Son Excellence le Comte de Beust, etc., etc.

Paris le 8 *janvier* 1863.

Monsieur le Comte!

J'ai reçu la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire en réponse à la mienne du 21 décembre, et je regrette que cette dernière ne vous soit parvenue que dix jours après avoir été écrite.

Ce délai, comme vous avez pu vous en convaincre, est indépendant de ma volonté.

J'ai lu avez toute l'attention qu'elles méritent les observations que vous ont suggérées les récentes publications que les circonstances m'ont imposées bien à regret ; il me semble y trouver la trace de quelque malentendu sur la nature et la portée de mes affirmations, et je crois devoir au bon souvenir de nos anciennes relations de ne laisser subsister à cet égard aucune équivoque.

Mais, avant d'aller plus loin, je dois vous prévenir que je n'accepte en quoi que ce soit la responsabilité de tout ce qui se dit ou s'écrit autour de mes paroles. Je ne réponds que de mon propre langage.

Je crois superflu de vous assurer que ce n'est pas le désir d'une justification personnelle qui m'a mis la plume à la main. S'il en eut été ainsi, je n'aurai pas, pendant deux ans de suite, gardé un silence que je n'avais aucune envie de rompre.

L'incident a été provoqué par le retentissement du langage intempérant et inexact de Monsieur Thiers qu'il devenait nécessaire pour l'honneur de la France d'arrêter aux passage.

Cela posé, vous remarquerez que je n'ai jamais prétendu que vous nous aviez encouragé à faire la guerre. J'admets parfaitement, parce que c'est la vérité, que vous nous en aviez dissuadé jusqu'au moment où vous avez envoyé à Paris Monsieur le Comte Vitzthum ; je n'ai aucune difficulté à reconnaître que, le 13 juillet, vous nous avez même conseillé de nous tenir pour satisfaits de la renonciation du Prince de Hohenzollern dans les termes où elle s'était produite le 12. Et j'y ajoute que je ne doute pas qu'il vous ait été fort pénible d'apprendre que cette circonstance n'avait pas suffi pour éteindre le conflit franco-prussien.

Je reconnais aussi que les promesses de concours dont j'ai cité la formule sont postérieures à la déclaration de guerre, et enfin, je termine ces aveux en déclarant qu'en mon âme et conscience je ne puis adresser aucun reproche au Gouvernement autrichien au sujet de la ligne de conduite qu'il a tenue à l'égard de la France, et qui lui a été imposée par les évènements. Je ne suis pas en mesure d'apprécier la nature des bons rapports qui existent maintenant entre

le cabinet de Vienne et celui de Berlin ; mais, comme l'incident qui nous occupe n'a rien mis en lumière qui ne fut connu à Berlin, il est évident qu'il n'a rien pu compromettre de ce côté ; et quant à ce qui nous concerne, la nation française ne peut voir dans ces informations que de nouveaux motifs de sympathie et d'estime pour l'Autriche. Et, comme vous le dites avec raison, Monsieur le Comte, c'est là l'essentiel.

Vous me rappelez qu'ayant eu l'honneur de vous voir à Londres en 1871, nous avions beaucoup causé des évènements de 1870, et qu'alors je vous avais dit sans réserve que j'avais compris votre manière d'agir et que je ne vous avais adressé aucun reproche. Vos souvenirs sont très-exacts. Je n'avais alors et je n'ai encore aujourd'hui aucun reproche à vous adresser. Quant au langage que vous a prêté Monsieur Thiers, il est bien naturel que je ne vous en aie pas parlé à Londres, car je ne le connaissais pas, et je n'en ai été informé qu'au commencement du mois dernier par la publication de son étrange déposition.

J'écarte pour le moment toute controverse sur les négociations de 1868, 1869 et 1870. Cela n'offrirait aucun avantage ; je me borne seulement à vous rappeler que ces négociations, dont vous fûtes le premier à m'instruire, étaient restées 'ouvertes' (c'est le mot textuel) en 1869, et qu'elles ont servi de base et de point de départ au traité qui a été négocié à la fin de juillet 1870 en vue de la guerre et de la coopération de l'Autriche à cette guerre. Donc la date de 1870 trouve sa place correcte et légitime à côté des dates antérieures de 1868 et 1869.

J'affirme deux choses :

La première, c'est que pendant que j'étais ambassadeur à Vienne vous ne m'avez pas dit qu'il ne fallait laisser au Gouvernement impérial aucune illusion, et le bien convaincre au contraire que s'il s'engageait dans la guerre l'Autriche ne le suivrait pas.

Cette affirmation, je la maintiens avec une certitude parfaite qui s'appuie non pas seulement sur la mémoire qui est cependant très-sûre, mais aussi sur les notes que j'ai conservées. Je n'ai jamais eu, Monsieur le Comte, une seule conversation avec vous, fût-elle de quelques minutes, que je n'en ai écrit la substance, et souvent les

mots eux-mêmes avant la fin de la journée. Aussi, je suis certain de ce que j'avance quand je déclare que vous ne m'avez pas tenu à Vienne le langage que vous prête Monsieur Thiers.

Nous avons souvent parlé de la guerre, nous étions d'accord pour ne pas la désirer, et nous reconnaissions qu'il se faisait en Allemagne un travail qu'il était de l'intérêt de l'Autriche comme de la France de ne pas interrompre. Nous avons quelquefois envisagé l'eventualité de la guerre en thèse générale, et je vois dans mes notes qu'alors vous me représentiez combien il serait désirable que la guerre, si elle devenait nécessaire, naquît d'une cause non-allemande, qu'elle prit naissance, par example, au sujet de quelque question orientale, de manière à laisser à l'Autriche toute sa liberté d'action pour la part qu'elle serait appelée à y prendre. Je suppose que vos souvenirs seront ici d'accord avec les miens ; mais quant aux paroles que Monsieur Thiers a placées dans votre bouche, je n'en vois aucune trace, si ce n'est dans cette dépêche écrite par vous le 11 juillet 1870 à Monsieur l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche, et dont je viens de prendre connaissance pour la première fois, dans la copie que vous avez bien voulu m'envoyer.

Là, en effet, je vois que vous chargez Monsieur l'ambassadeur de nous enlever toute illusion et de nous faire entendre avec ménagement que nous ne devons pas compter sur votre concours.

Cherchant toujours de préférence les explications qui n'aboutissent pas à des résultats extrêmes, je me fais l'idée qu'il se sera établi dans les esprits quelque confusion involontaire entre le langage écrit le 11 juillet 1870 et le langage parlé pendant les années précédentes.

Je ne vois pas d'ailleurs que, pendant le cours de ma mission à Vienne, se soit présenté une seule occasion où l'Autriche ait été mise en demeure de se prononcer sur ses dispositions à faire la guerre, et je n'ai jamais eu à réclamer de vous son concours, même eventuel, à cet effet. Ainsi donc, je le répète et le maintiens formellement, vous ne m'avez jamais, pendant que j'étais ambassadeur à Vienne, tenu le langage que vous prête Monsieur Thiers.

J'apprends aujourd'hui que vous l'avez écrit plus tard au Prince de Metternich, dans cette dépêche du 11 juillet que vous venez de m'envoyer et que je ne connaissais pas, parceque Monsieur l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche ne nous l'a jamais montrée.

Je vois en effet, dans la copie que vous venez de m'adresser, que vous recommandez à Monsieur l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche d'employer son zèle et son influence pour faire accepter vos réserves à Sa Majesté et à ses Ministres, sans provoquer leur mécontentement, et je trouve dans cette communication tardive la clef d'une situation qui nous causa pendant quelques jours d'assez sérieuses préoccupations. Il se fit alors entre vous, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche, et moi un échange d'explications verbales et écrites qui eut pour effet de dissiper ce que vous avez appelé des malentendus regrettables. Monsieur le Comte de Vitzthum vint à Paris, et aussitôt s'effacèrent toutes les traces de la froideur qu'avaient naturellement engendrée vos réserves, bien que Monsieur l'Ambassadeur dAutriche, suivant vos instructions, n'eût rien négligé pour en adoucir l'expression.

Monsieur de Vitzthum voit l'Empereur, il cause avec moi, retourne à Vienne, et c'est aussitôt après son retour que vous écrivez, le 20 juillet, ces mots :

'Le Comte Vitzthum a rendu compte à notre auguste maître du message verbal dont l'Empereur Napoléon a daigné le charger. Ces paroles impériales, ainsi que les éclaircissements que Monsieur le Duc de Gramont a bien voulu y ajouter, ont fait disparaître toute possibilité d'un malentendu que l'imprévu de cette guerre soudaine aurait pu faire naître. Veuillez donc répéter à Sa Majesté et à ses Ministres que, fidèles à nos engagements tels qu'ils ont été consignés dans les lettres échangées l'année dernière entre les deux Souverains, nous considérons la cause de la France comme la nôtre, et que nous contribuerons au succès de ses armes dans les limites du possible.'

Je renonce bien volontiers à donner au mot de répéter la signification qui, dites-vous, ne lui appartient pas ; mais, d'un autre côté, je ne puis m'empêcher de relever la différence radicale qui existe entre l'attitude du cabinet de Vienne le 20 juillet, et celle qu'il paraissait vouloir prendre le 11 dans ce document inédit et inconnu que vous venez de porter à ma connaissance. Comment se fait-il que le 13 juillet, à la réception de cette dépêche (du 11), Monsieur l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche ne m'ait fait aucune communication du genre de celle qu'il m'a faite il 24, à la réception de votre dépêche

du 20 ? Pourquoi ne m'avait-il pas laissé cette première dépêche, comme il m'a laissé la seconde ?

Je ne me charge pas de répondre en ce moment à cette question, mais je constate que le 24 juillet j'avais dans mes mains la déclaration qu'il n'existait plus de malentendu entre nous et le cabinet de Vienne, et, de plus, la promesse formelle qu'il contribuerait au succès de nos armes dans la mesure du possible. C'est là ma seconde affirmation ; et, vous en conviendrez, elle est indiscutable.

S'agissait-il de contribuer au succès de nos armes d'une façon platonique, si je puis m'exprimer ainsi, par des vœux sympathiques, sans jamais tirer l'épée ? Je crois qu'il est difficile de l'admettre, et d'ailleurs, vous aviez pris le soin de nous rassurer à cet égard, car vous ajoutiez plus loin : 'Dans ces circonstances, le mot neutralité que nous prononçons, non sans regret, nous est imposé par une nécessité impérieuse et par une appréciation logique de nos intérêts solidaires. Mais cette neutralité n'est qu'un moyen, le moyen de nous rapprocher du but véritable de notre politique, le seul moyen de compléter nos armements sans nous exposer à une attaque soudaine, soit de la Prusse, soit de la Russie, avant d'être en mesure de nous défendre.' Et le soir du même jour (24 juillet), Monsieur l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche, précisant d'advantage cette question des armements, m'informait par écrit que, dans l'état où la guerre avait surpris l'Autriche, il ne lui serait pas possible d'entrer en campagne avant le commencement de septembre.

Enfin, bien que la promesse de concours ressorte suffisamment de ce qui précède, et qu'en vérité il me semble superflu d'insister davantage, je vous rappellerai ce qui s'est passé lorsque Monsieur le Vicomte de Vitzthum revint à Paris, et qu'alors, de concert avec Monsieur l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche, il posa avec moi les bases, les articles mêmes de ce traité, qui déclarait nettement que la neutralité armée des puissances contractantes était déstinée à se transformer en coopération effective avec la France contre la Prusse.

Je vous rappellerai que ce sont les représentants de l'Autriche, vos propres plénipotentiaires et mandataires, qui ont suggéré le mode de cette transformation de la neutralité armée en coopération effective, et que ce mode consistait, une fois prêt, à réclamer de la Prusse, sous

forme d'ultimatum, l'engagement de ne rien entreprendre contre le *status quo* défini par le traité de Prague. Les négociateurs autrichiens disaient alors, avec raison, que le refus de la Prusse était certain et qu'il deviendrait le signal des hostilités combinées.

Et maintenant, Monsieur le Comte, vous me demandez si les communications du 20 juillet, ou, pour parler plus correctement, du 24 juillet, jour où je les ai reçues, ont pu me faire 'penser sérieusement que nous devions mettre en ligne de compte une intervention de l'Autriche à main armée'? Mais je ne puis faire autrement que de vous retourner la même question.

Du moment où l'Autriche promet de contribuer au succès de nos armes; quand l'Autriche nous explique que la neutralité qu'elle proclame n'est qu'un moyen, que cette neutralité n'est que le moyen de compléter ses armements pour se rapprocher du but véritable de sa politique, lequel but est de contribuer au succès de nos armes; quand son Ambassadeur m'écrit que les armées autrichiennes ne pourront entrer en campagne que dans les premiers jours de septembre; quand les plénipotentiaires autrichiens placent dans un traité négocié en ma présence et avec mon concours un article portant que la neutralité armée des puissances contractantes est destinée à être transformée en coopération effective avec la France contre la Prusse: quand ces mêmes plénipotentiaires suggèrent les premiers la manière de procéder diplomatiquement à cette transformation que doivent suivre les hostilités; c'est moi qui vous le demande sérieusement, Monsieur le Comte, que devions-nous penser?

Vous ajoutez 'qu'étant resté aux affaires plusieurs semaines encore pendant que les évènements de la guerre se sont rapidement succédé, je n'ai envoyé à Vienne ni un télégramme, ni une dépêche pour rappeler à l'Autriche ses engagements et pour hâter ses opérations militaires,' et vous en concluez que je ne pouvais croire sérieusement à la coopération d'une armée autrichienne.

Rappeler à l'Autriche ses promesses, quand nous nous battions, quelques jours après les avoir reçues! J'avoue que l'idée ne m'en est même pas venue.

Mais si vous croyez que je n'aie pas écrit à notre Ambassadeur de recourir à tous les moyens en son pouvoir pour hâter vos opéra-

tions militaires, vous êtes dans une grande erreur, et j'ai sous les yeux les minutes de plusieurs dépêches, entre autres de celles que je lui ai adressées le 27 et le 31 juillet et le 3 août, qui n'avaient pas d'autre objet.

Je ne doutais pas des intentions de l'Autriche ; je n'en doute pas d'avantage aujourd'hui, et j'ai la conviction que si nos revers, aussi soudains qu'imprévus, n'avaient rendu son concours impossible, ce concours nous eût été donné comme il nous avait été promis ; j'avais, je l'avoue, un peu moins de confiance dans la promptitude de ses préparatifs, bien que je reçusse à cet égard de personnages très-compétentes, des informations rassurantes.

Je termine, Monsieur le Comte, cette lettre déjà trop longue, en protestant de nouveau contre toute idée de reproche et de récrimination. Je maintiens mes deux affirmations, mais rien n'est plus loin de ma pensée que de vouloir faire un grief soit au Gouvernement impérial et royal, soit à vous-même de la conduite politique de l'Autriche après nos désastres. Ce serait manquer au plus haut dégré de sens pratique et même d'équité que de s'étonner du temps d'arrêt qui a été la conséquence de nos défaites successives et surtout de nos désordres intérieurs. Je dirai même, qu'il y aurait de notre part une certaine ingratitude à ne pas connaître qu'entre toutes les puissances l'Autriche a été la dernière à abondonner complètement la France.

J'ai trop longtemps résidé a Vienne pour ne pas apprécier toute la différence, toute la distance qui séparent l'Autriche et son Gouvernement de cette phalange de journaux payés par la Prusse, et dont plus d'une fois vous avez déploré avec moi, verbalement ou par écrit, la vénalité et l'absence de patriotisme. Nous le savons en France, les sympathies de la véritable Autriche nous ont suivi au-delà de nos revers, et nous ne serions dégagés de la reconnaissance que du jour ou il nous serait démontré que son Gouvernement cherche à répudier aujourd'hui les sentiments qu'il professait jadis.

Je regrette, Monsieur le Comte, d'avoir donné à ma réponse un développement aussi considérable, et je vous prie d'y voir une marque de la considération que j'ai pour vous et pour toutes les communications que vous voulez bien me faire.

Il a fallu un état de choses aussi exceptionnel que celui de mon

malheureux pays ; il a fallu ce fait aussi étrange qu'incroyable d'un chef d'État s'égarant dans les entraînements d'un langage de partisan, pour me faire descendre dans l'arène et quitter ma retraite. Je me hâte d'y rentrer, maintenant que ma tâche est remplie, et j'aimerais à y emporter la confiance que vous ne vous méprenez pas sur le sentiment qui m'en a arraché pour quelques heures. C'était mon devoir.

Agréez, Monsieur le Comte, les assurances de ma haute considération

(signé) Gramont.

Private Letter from Count Beust.

Vous me parlez, cher ami, de la lettre du Duc de Gramont et Vous me demandez ce que j'en pense et ce qu'il faut en penser.

Vous partagez ainsi judicieusement Votre question en deux parties, l'une m'étant personnelle et l'autre se rapportant au fond de la chose même.

En Vous disant quelle est ma pensée je crois deviner la Vôtre. Ce n'est pas ma pensée que Vous voulez connaître, c'est l'impression que la lettre a faite sur moi et que Vous supposez sans doute avoir été fâcheuse. Eh bien, je ne dirai pas absolument le contraire. Le Duc de Gramont, avec lequel pendant quatre années je n'avais cessé d'entretenir les relations les plus amicales, est venu me voir peu de temps après mon installation à l'Ambassade de Londres. Nous avons beaucoup causé des évènements survenus depuis, et dans le courant de notre conversation il m'a communiqué plusieurs fois plusieurs détails qui sont de nature à l'excuser, je dirai même à l'exculper en présence des accusations que l'on fait peser sur lui. Aussi chaque fois que l'occasion s'en est présentée je n'ai pas oublié d'en tirer parti pour prendre sa défense. Mais en même temps, notez bien ceci ! il m'a dit qu'il avait parfaitement compris ma politique et l'attitude de l'Autriche, et pas le plus léger reproche n'est sorti de sa bouche. Je Vous dirai plus : Je lui rappelai mon télégramme, par lequel j'avais chargé le Prince de Metternich de l'engager dans les termes les plus pressants à se contenter de la renonciation du Prince

de Hohenzollern et à l'exploiter comme succès diplomatique incontestable. Il me dit qu'il avait partagé ma manière de voir, mais qu'il avait dû agir en conséquence d'une décision arrêtée en sens contraire. Je ne commets pas d'indiscrétion avec ces dernières paroles, car ce qu'elles disent, se retrouve dans le livre publié par le Duc lui-même. Jugez donc de mon étonnement lorsqu'à la veille de partir en congé avec une parfaite liberté d'esprit, j'eus la surprise de cette lettre avec la perspective assez déplaisante d'une polémique avec les journaux, moi qui me félicitais d'en avoir perdu l'habitude.

Cependant une grande partie de la presse—et Vous conviendrez que ce ne fut pas la plus mauvaise—a accueilli la prétendue révélation avec un esprit de calme et de réserve auquel on ne saurait trop rendre justice ; j'ai le ferme espoir que cet incident ne servira ni à compromettre les bons rapports de mon pays avec l'Allemagne ni à refroidir les sentiments de sympathie et d'estime qu'on nous a gardés en France. C'est là l'essentiel. Ce qui me concerne personnellement est d'un intérêt secondaire. Mais si j' avais encore l'honneur d'être Ministre de l'Empereur, et que j'eusse à répondre à une interpellation, je dirais ceci :

La guerre de 1870, entreprise contrairement à mes conseils et à mes prévisions, avait placé l'Autriche-Hongrie dans une position des plus difficiles. Il est facile aujourd'hui de dire ce que nous avions à faire, il n'en était pas de même lorsque l'issue restait douteuse, et qu'il était du devoir d'un Ministre d'envisager avec une entière indépendance de jugement les éventualités les plus diverses qui pouvaient en résulter et qui étaient toutes d'une portée grave pour les intérêts et l'avenir de la Monarchie. J'ai rempli consciencieusement la mien dans des moments souvent pénibles, et je crois ne pas avoir fait fausse route. Les calamités de la guerre nous ont été épargnées, le vainqueur est devenu notre ami, le vaincu n'a rien eu à nous reprocher, la lettre du Duc de Gramont l'atteste, car elle déclare l'attitude de l'Autriche avoir été sympathique et loyale. N'est-ce-pas assez pour être content ?

Voilà ce que je dirais et voilà ce que dira un jour l'histoire, qui juge les choses dans leur ensemble et les hommes suivant le bien ou le mal qu'ils ont fait à leur pays.

Et ceci carrément posé, je Vous dirai à Vous que je n'ai pas à craindre les publications pourvu qu'elles soient complètes.

Mais, me direz-Vous, et nous voilà arrivés à la second partie de Votre question : qu'est-ce qui en est du langage que Monsieur de Gramont aurait été autorisé à tenir à son Gouvernement, et quel est le document dont il parle ? Eh, mon cher ami, c'est précisément ce que je lui ai demandé le jour même ou j'ai lu sa lettre dans les journaux. La mienne, confiée aux soins de notre Ambassade à Paris, lui à été remise le 21 de ce mois, mais je suis encore à l'heure qu'il est à attendre une réponse. On dit que le Duc est de nouveau souffrant.

J'en ai été donc réduit à fouiller dans ma mémoire, ne pouvant fouiller dans les papiers, et je n'y ai encore rien trouvé qui puisse m'éclairer. Mais ce que dès-à-présent je puis Vous certifier, c'est que dans tous les cas le Duc s'est singulièrement trompé de date. Et c'est la date qu'il importe de connaître et que je l'ai particulièrement prié de m'indiquer.

Le Duc de Gramont parle du temps où il était Ambassadeur à Vienne, puisqu'il parle du langage qu'il était autorisé à tenir à son Gouvernement, et qu'il cherche à refuter un passage de la déposition de Monsieur Thiers qui se rapporte à la même époque. Or je déclare une communication qui aurait autorisé l'Ambassadeur de France à dire à son Gouvernement qu'il pouvait compter sur l'Autriche en cas d'une guerre, absolument impossible ; je déclare pareille communication ne jamais lui avoir été faite. Veuillez donc me dire Vous-même s'il est seulement admissible, en supposant même que nous ayons été dans les dispositions les plus favorables à la France, qu'il aurait pu entrer dans notre pensée de nous engager ainsi pour une guerre *in abstracto* et avant l'existence même d'un *casus belli ;* si l'on parle d'épouser une cause avant qu'il n'y ait une cause. Et dites-moi encore s'il est admissible qu'après avoir reçu de telles assurances à Vienne le Duc de Gramont, devenu Ministre des affaires étrangères, se trouvant en présence d'une complication des plus graves, n'ait pas songé aussitôt à transformer ces assurances en traité. Mais c'est là ce qui a été si peu le cas que des propositions d'alliance nous ont été seulement faites après la déclaration de guerre.

Car, soit dit en passant, il n'existe pas et il n'a jamais existé une transaction quelconque qui eut engagé l'Autriche à entrer en campagne ni à propos de la candidature Hohenzollern ni de la paix de Prague, ni de la ligne du Main, ni pour tout autre objet.

Nous ne pouvions que décliner ces propositions, qui nous furent faites au milieu du mois de julliet, et le désappointement, bien que nullement légitime, n'en fut pas moins profond et regrettable. C'est dans ce moment là où il n'y avait plus moyen d'arrêter les conséquences d'une décision vivement combattue, où nous devions refuser ce que l'on attendait de nous ; il est possible que dans une lettre particulière où l'on ne pèse pas toujours les mots, il se trouvent des paroles rassurantes, qui dans l'état on en étaient les choses ne pouvaient plus exercer une influence sur les déterminations du Gouvernement français et qui n'ont pu devenir fatales pour lui, car ce qu'on lui reproche ce n'est pas d'avoir fait une guerre qu'il avait déclarée, c'est de l'avoir déclarée, et ce n'est pas nous qui l'avons encouragé à la faire.

Voilà comment les choses se sont passées ; et le Duc de Gramont a donc eu raison de dire que la conduite de l'Autriche était sympathique et loyale.

Mais encore un mot. Voudra-t-on peut-être trouver notre maintien qui, je le répète, était dicté par une appréciation consciencieuse de toutes les phases de notre position, incompatible avec notre déclaration de neutralité ? Ce serait se faire une idée très-fausse de ce que c'est que la neutralité. En se déclarant neutre un état s'engage à remplir les obligations que lui impose la neutralité tant qu'il reste neutre, mais la déclaration de neutralité n'est pas un pacte avec les belligérants qui enchaîne sa politique et qui l'empêche de l'abandonner le jour où il le voudrait. En veut-on une preuve, il n'y a qu'à se reporter à la dernière guerre.

E.

Correspondence Relative to Russia and the Black Sea.

Le Comte de Beust au Comte de Chotek
à St. Pétersbourg.

Vienne, *le* 16 *Novembre* 1870.

Nr. 1.

L'Envoyé de Russie m'a remis il y a quelques jours copie d'une dépêche dont Vous trouvez également une copie ci-annexée.

Je me suis empressé de la placer sous les yeux de l'Empereur et Roi, notre Auguste Maître, et c'est d'ordre de Sa Majesté que je Vous charge de porter les observations suivantes à la connaissance de M. le Prince Gortchacow.

Voici ce que porte l'article 14 du traité conclu à Paris le 30 mars 1856 :

'Leurs Majestés l'Empereur de toutes les Russies et le Sultan, ayant conclu une convention à l'effet de déterminer la force et le nombre des bâtiments légers nécessaires au service de Leurs côtes qu'Elles se réservent d'entretenir dans la Mer Noire, cette convention est annexée au présent traité, et aura même force et valeur que si elle en faisait partie intégrante. Elle ne pourra être ni annulée ni modifiée sans l'assentiment des Puissances signataires du présent traité.'

Le dernier paragraphe de cet article, par ses termes positifs, acquiert une valeur particulière en ajoutant expressément et exceptionellement une stipulation qui, de tout temps, a été regardée comme sous-entendue dans chaque transaction internationale.

Nous ne saurions donc concevoir ni admettre un doute sur la

force absolue de cet engagement réciproque, lors même que l'une ou l'autre des parties contractantes se croirait dans le cas de faire valoir les considérations les mieux fondées contre le maintien de telle ou telle disposition d'un traité qu'on est convenu de déclarer d'avance ne pouvoir jamais être ni annulé ni modifié sans l'assentiment de toutes les Puissances qui l'ont signé.

C'est uniquement pour ne pas manquer aux égards dûs au Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg que, sans nous arrêter à ce simple renvoi qui résume toute notre pensée sur l'ouverture qu'il vient de nous faire, nous entrons dans un examen des arguments sur lesquels repose cette communication.

La dépêche de M. le Chancelier de Russie commence par relever une certaine inégalité ou iniquité dont les dispositions du traité seraient entachées, en ce qu'elles limitaient les moyens de défense de la Russie dans la Mer Noire, tandis qu'elles permaittaient à la Turquie d'entretenir des forces navales illimitées dans l'Archipel et les détroits.

Il ne nous appartient pas de discuter ni l'origine ni la valeur d'un arrangement qui n'a pas été passé entre la Russie et nous, mais qui est commun à toutes les Grandes Puissances. Nous nous permettrons seulement de faire observer à M. le Prince Gortchacow qu'une réflexion pareille peut empêcher la signature d'un traité, et qu'après la signature elle peut servir de base à une demande de modification, mais que jamais elle ne peut autoriser une solution arbitraire. Nous dirons plus. Les raisons que le Gouvernement de Russie met en avant pour justifier un acte unilatéral, loin d'en atténuer la portée, ne font qu'ajouter à la gravité des considérations qui s'y rattachent. La maxime qu'il lui plaît d'adopter compromet non seulement tous les traités existants, mais encore ceux à venir. Elle peut contribuer à les rendre faciles, elle ne servira pas à les rendre solides.

Cependant le Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg rappelle des dérogations auxquelles le traité de 1856 n'aurait pas échappé.

Il est question de révolutions qui s'étaient accomplies dans les Principautés danubiennes et qui, contrairement à l'esprit et à la lettre du traité et de ses annexes, avaient conduit à l'Union des Principautés et à l'appel d'un Prince étranger.

Qu'il nous soit permis de faire ressortir un point qui nous semble capital.

Les Principautés de Moldavie et de Valachie n'étaient point partie contractante du traité de 1856. Elles se trouvent sous la suzeraineté de la Porte ottomane.

Était-ce bien celle-ci qui était responsable des changements survenus dans ces pays et qui, aux yeux du Gouvernement Impérial de Russie, constituent une infraction aux traités?

Est-ce bien elle qui a demandé qu'on les sanctionnât, et n'est-ce pas elle qui aujourd'hui doit accepter une infraction évidemment préjudiciable à ses droits et à ses intérêts?

Reste l'entrée de quelques bâtiments de guerre étrangers dans la Mer Noire. Ces faits nous sont inconnus, à moins qu'il ne s'agisse des bâtiments de guerre désarmés qui servaient d'escorte à des Souverains. Ces apparitions, le Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg ne l'ignore pas, avaient certes un caractère bien inoffensif. Rien d'ailleurs n'empêchait le Gouvernement de Russie de porter plainte du moment où elles lui paraissaient incompatibles avec les dispositions du traité.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Impériale et Royale Apostolique n'a donc pu apprendre qu'avec un pénible regret la détermination que nous annonce la dépêche de M. le Prince Gortchacow et par la quelle le Gouvernement Impérial de Rusie assume sur lui une grave responsibilité. Il lui est impossible de ne pas en témoigner sa profonde surprise, et d'appeler la sérieuse attention du Cabinet Impérial sur les conséquences d'un procédé qui non seulement porte atteinte à un acte international signé par toutes les Grandes Puissances, mais qui se produit encore au milieu de circonstances où plus que jamais l'Europe a besoin des garanties qu'offre à son repos et à son avenir la foi des traités.

Vous donnerez lecture de la présente dépêche à M. le Prince Gortchacow et Vous lui en laisserez copie.

Recevez, etc.

Le Comte de Beust au Comte de Chotek
à St. Pétersbourg.

Vienne *le 16 Novembre* 1870.

Nr. 2.

Après m'avoir communiqué la circulaire du 19/31 octobre d^r. à laquelle ma dépêche No. 1 de ce jour sert de réplique, M. l'Envoyé de Russie m'a donné lecture de quelques passages d'une autre dépêche de son Cabinet, relative à la même affaire, mais portant un caractère plus confidentiel

Dans cette pièce M. le Prince Gortchacow, faisant appel à nos sentiments d'amitié pour la Cour de Russie, exprime l'espoir de nous trouver d'autant plus disposés à juger avec faveur sa détermination de s'affranchir des stipulations réglant la neutralisation de la Mer Noire que le Gouvernement I. & R. avait lui-même, dès le mois de janvier 1867, pris l'initiative d'une proposition dont l'effet eût été de dégager la Russie des restrictions que lui imposaient ces mêmes stipulations.

J'ai répondu à M. Novikow que, sans nul doute, nous avions toujours témoigné le plus vif désir de consolider nos bons rapports avec la Cour de St. Pétersbourg, et que l'initiative rappelée par le Prince Gortchacow avait été l'expression la plus éclatante peut-être de ce bon vouloir de notre part ; mais que je ne pouvais me défendre d'un sentiment de regret en reportant mes souvenirs sur la démarche dont il s'agit, et en me retraçant l'accueil plus que froid qu'elle avait rencontré auprès de ceux-là même qui eussent dû s'y montrer les plus sensibles. M. le Chancelier ne peut avoir oublié qu'au lieu d'éveiller dans son esprit un écho sympathique, elle ne provoqua de sa part que des critiques et des reproches que nous ne nous attendions certes pas à voir se produire de ce côté.

Le prédécesseur de Votre Excellence ne put que nous mander alors que le chef du Cabinet russe trouva it notre manière d'agir précipitée ; que, dans son opinion, elle avait suscité sans nécessité la méfiance du Gouvernement français ; et que l'idée, mise en avant par nous, d'une conférence pour le règlement des questions à résoudre en Orient, lui semblait peu propre à assurer un résultat satisfaisant. A coup sûr, cette manière de répondre à une avance aussi loyale que

bienveillante était faite pour exciter notre surprise. La Russie pouvait contester l'opportunité de notre proposition, à laquelle l'adhésion de la France et de l'Angleterre avait fait défaut ; mais la pensée qui l'avait inspirée, pensée toute bienveillante pour la Russie et favorable à ses vœux, n'en constituait pas moins une preuve manifeste de nos bonnes dispositions qui méritait d'être mieux accueillie.

J'ai signalé, en outre, à M. l'Envoyé de Russie la différence essentielle qui existe entre la combinaison suggérée par nous en 1876, et la déclaration que son Gouvernement vient d'émettre.

Aux termes de notre projet, les entraves apportées à la liberté d'action de la Russie dans l'Euxin devaient être écartées dans les formes déterminées par le traité même et non par un simple acte unilatéral. De ce que nous avions recommandé l'abrogation légale, prononcée par l'unanimité des Cours signataires, il ne s'en suivait nullement que nous dûssions approuver une annulation arbitrairement et isolément signifiée par la partie obligée. L'article 14 du traité du 30 mars 1856 porte, en toutes lettres, que la Convention conclue le même jour entre les deux États riverains de la Mer Noire ne pourra être ni annulée ni modifiée sans l'assentiment des Puissances garantes, et je ne comprendrais donc pas que le Gouvernement russe, en suivant aujourd'hui, pour se libérer des charges de cette Convention, un mode de procéder diamétralement opposé à la clause que je viens de citer, pût nous taxer d'inconséquence, lorsque c'est précisément l'application de cette clause qui formait la base de notre programme.

Enfin, ai-je fait observer à M. Novikow, la marche proposée à cette époque par le Cabinet I. & R. n'était aucunement de nature à entraîner les dangereuses conséquences qu'il y a lieu de redouter de l'acte récent du Cabinet de St Pétersbourg. En obtenant, de l'aveu de l'Europe, le retrait de l'interdiction qui empêche le développement de ses forces navales dans la Mer Noire, la Russie recouvrait la position qui lui est dûe dans ces parages, sans qu'il eût fallu en concevoir des alarmes. Il n'en est pas ainsi aujourd'hui. La démarche qui vient d'être faite ne saurait manquer d'exciter les plus sérieuses inquiétudes. Dans l'Europe occidentale, elle produit déjà une irritation des esprits fort préjudiciable à la cause de la paix ; dans le Levant cet essai de la Russie de se faire justice elle-même sera envisagé sans

doute comme une preuve que cette Puissance a jugé le moment venu de prendre en main la solution de ce qu'on est convenu d'appeler la Question d'Orient. Les imaginations si ardentes des peuples chrétiens de ces contrées y trouveront un stimulant des plus actifs. L'exemple frappant d'un État dont le prestige est si grand à leurs yeux leur semblera désormais, nous le craignons, justifier toutes les agitations et toutes les violences.

Le Chancelier russe ne saurait disconvenir qu'il y a là de quoi nous préoccuper, et il ne s'étonnera donc pas que nous prenions très au sérieux la surprise qu'il a ménagée au monde politique. Nous voyons, dans l'attitude prise par le Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg, non pas une menace directe à l'Europe, mais une cause de perturbation fâcheuse, mettant en péril son repos et sa sécurité.

Je n'ai jamais fait mystère de ma conviction que les transactions de 1856 ont placé la Russie, sur la Mer Noire, dans une situation peu digne d'une Grande Puissance, en amoindrissant le rôle qu'elle est appelée à jouer dans les eaux qui baignant son territoire, et je n'ai rien négligé, je puis le dire, pour faire partager cette conviction aux autres Cours garantes. Aussi, n'en ai-je été que plus peiné de voir le Gouvernement Impérial recourir, pour le redressment de ses griefs, à un moyen qui, sous tous les rapports, me paraît le moins heureusement choisi.

Tel est le langage que j'ai tenu à M. Novikow en cette circonstance. J'ai cru utile de le reproduire dans le présente dépêche, dont Votre Excellence voudra bien donner lecture à M. le Prince Gortchacow et dont Elle est même autorisée à lui laisser copie s'il en témoignait le désir.

Recevez, etc.

F.

Despatch on Polish Affairs.

Le Comte de Beust au Comte Apponyi à Londres.

Lettre particuliere

Vienne, *le* 27 *Juin* 1870.

Il me revient de different côtés que la question polanaise a joué un certain rôle dans l'entrevue d'Ems. Les deux Souverians auraient, m'assure-t-on, jugé necessaire d'établir entre eux une sorte d'entente provoquée par l'attitude du Gouvernement Impérial et Royal dans les affaires de la Galicie.

Cette nouvelle m'est encore confirmée par les renseignements que Vous me transmettez sous la date du 23 de ce mois. D'après les détails confidentiels que Vous me donnez sur votre 'conversation intime' avec Lord Clarendon, il me semble que Sa Seigneurie ne trouve pas entièrement dénuées de fondement les alarmes qui, à ce que nos voisins prétendent, leur sont inspirées par notre conduite vis-à-vis des Galiciens. Je vois avec plaisir que Vous Vous êtes efforcé de placer les faits sous leur vrai jour, et je ne puis qu'approuver le langage que Vous avez tenu au Principal-Secrétaire d'État. Le sujet est cependant assez important pour mériter qu'on y revienne, et je crois devoir Vous indiquer quelques considérations nouvelles que je Vous prie de soumettre, lorsque Vous en trouverez l'occasion, à l'appréciation de Lord Clarendon.

Avant tout je dois établir en principe, ainsi que Vous l'avez déjà fait, que la manière dont nous gouvernons la Galicie est purement une question d'administration intérieure, et qu'il est, si non impossible, du moins fort dangereux d'admettre que des questions de cette nature puissent devenir l'objet d'une entente entres des Puissanes

étrangères. Qu'un Gouvernement établisse chez lui un régime plus libéral que celui qui existe chez ses voisins, il n'y a certes pas là une raison suffisante pour que ceux-ci aient le droit de se plaindre et d'agir comme s'ils étaient directement menacés. Tant qu'il n'y a pas de propagande active exercée au-delà des frontières, tant qu'il n'y a pas de tentative d'étendre une influence illicite sur les pays adjacents, tout Gouvernement doit rester libre d'organiser comme il l'entend l'administration de ses provinces, et ses voisins ne sauraient avoir un juste motif de prendre de l'ombrage.

S'il en était autrement, on laisserait s'établir un précédent fort grave et d'une portée très-menaçante pour le maintien de la paix. Que dirait-on, par exemple, en Angleterre, si l'Autriche et la France manifestant des alarmes de la politique suivie par la Prusse à l'égard des aspirations de la nationalité allemande, déclaraient y voir un motif de se concerter étroitement afin de parer à toutes les éventualités. Je crois qu'un pareil langage paraîtrait au Cabinet de Londres plus inquiétant pour le maintien de la paix que telle ou telle avance faite par le Gouvernement prussien au parti national allemand ; et nous aurions sans doute en ce cas à entendre des reproches assez vifs de la bouche de Lord Clarendon.

Pourtant ce ne sont que ses propres nationaux que le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal cherche à se concilier en Galicie, car nous pouvons hardiment affirmer que jamais un acte ou une parole officielle n'a révélé de notre part le désir de flatter la nationalité polonaise en dehors de la Galicie.

Il me semble donc qu'on ne saurait reconnaître à la Prusse et à la Russie le droit de se formaliser des concessions que l'Autriche croit utile de faire aux Polonais de la Galicie. D'ailleurs ces craintes qu'on nous dit être conçues à Berlin et à St. Pétersbourg existent-elles réellement ? J'avoue que j'ai de la peine à y croire.

Il me serait difficile d'admettre que nos voisins pussent se réjouir de voir une province importante de l'Autriche rester mécontente ; mais qu'ils trouvent un danger pour eux à ce que cette province soit satisfaite, c'est ce que l'imagination la plus timorée ne saurait comprendre.

Si c'est en qualité de Puissances copartageantes, et en se fondant

sur les droits acquis à ce titre, que les deux Puissances prétendraient devoir s'occuper des affaires de Galicie, nous pourrions tout aussi bien réclamer de notre côté le droit de surveiller la manière dont la Russie gouverne ses provinces.

Nous n'élevons pas de pareilles prétentions, et si, par respect pour l'indépendance de tout Gouvernement dans les affaires du ressort de l'administration intérieure, nous gardons une réserve absolue devant les questions de cette nature, nous pensons qu'on pourrait observer envers l'Autriche les mêmes égards lorsqu'elle cherche à satisfaire les vœux légitimes de ses sujets de nationalité polonaise. Il y a eu une époque, sous l'administration du Marquis Wielopolski, où la Russie favorisait plutôt chez elle le développement de la nationalité polonaise. Quels que fussent alors nos sentiments à l'égard de cette manière de procéder du Gouvernement russe, nous n'avons pas trouvé que nous eussions à nous en préoccuper, ni cherché à établir une entente avec la Prusse pour nous prémunir contre les dangers qui pouvaient en résulter. Lorsque plus tard nous nous sommes, d'accord avec les Gouvernements d'Angleterre et de France, prévalus du texte des stipulations du traité de 1815 pour réclamer à St. Pétersbourg en faveur des Polonais, la situation était tout autre. L'insurrection polonaise constituait alors un véritable péril pour nous en particulier et pour le maintien de la tranquillité générale. Les Puissances pouvaient invoquer pour justifier leur conduite non seulement le texte d'un traité, mais l'urgence d'aviser à l'extinction d'une conflagration qui prenait des proportions redoutables et menaçait la sûreté des pays voisins. Il n'y a aucune analogie entre la situation actuelle de la Galicie et celle où se trouvait à cette époque le Royaume de Pologne. Le calme le plus complet règne en Galicie, et il serait étrange de prétendre que la tranquillité et le contentement d'une province sont une menace ou un danger pour les voisins.

Je contesterais donc absolument à la Prusse et à la Russie le droit de se faire une arme contre nous de l'organisation administrative qu'il nous plaît d'introduire en Galicie, et qui ne touche en rien aux intérêts de sujets prussiens ou russes. Je ne crois pas même beaucoup à la réalité des craintes qu'épouveraient ces Puissances.

Par contre, je ne disconveniens nullement de m'être montré

favorable, depuis mon entrée au Ministère, à l'adoption d'un système accordant une certaine satisfaction aux vœux de la Galicie.

En agissant ainsi, je crois m'être inspiré des conseils d'une saine politique; et je suis persuadé que tout homme d'état impartial appréciera les motifs qui m'ont dictée cette conduite.

Parmi les diverses nationalités répandues dans l'Empire Austro-Hongrois, la nationalité polonaise est une de celles dont le dévouement aux intérêts généraux et au maintien de l'Empire nous est le plus sûrement acquis.—En effet, elle n'a aucun appui à chercher en dehors de l'Empire dont elle fait partie. Sans parler de l'excellent contingent militaire que la Galicie a toujours fourni dans nos guerres, ses représentants dans nos Assemblées délibérantes se sont montrés jaloux de veiller à la grandeur de l'Empire. Ce sont eux qui, dans la Délégation du Reichsrath devant laquelle je suis spécialement appelé à défendre la politique Impériale, m'ont le plus fidèlement soutenu par leurs discours et leurs votes. Resserrer les liens qui les attachent à l'existence de l'Empire Austro-Hongrois m'a donc toujours paru essentiel; et ce but ne pouvait être mieux atteint qu'en leur accordant les concessions qu'ils réclamaient sur le terrain de l'autonomie administrative. C'est dans ce sens que j'ai plaidé leur cause avec conséquence dans les Conseils de l'Empereur, et que j'ai plus d'une fois insisté sur la nécessité de les rallier étroitement autour des nouvelles institutions de l'Empire. Qu'il faille pour cela leur donner certains droits favorables au dévoloppement de leur sentiment national, le fait est incontestable. Mais ces droits sont circonscrits aux limites de la province; et nous apportons une attention scrupuleuse à les contrôler de façon à ce qu'ils ne puissent pas franchir ces bornes. J'en citerai ici un exemple. Le Ministère du Comte Potocki accepte la présence dans le Conseils des Ministres d'un Ministre spécialement chargé de représenter les intérêts de la Galicie, parceque ce Ministre doit être, comme ses collègues, responsable devant le Reichsrath, c'est-à-dire, devant la représentation générale des provinces cisleithanes, de la part qu'il prend à la direction de la politique. Il n'est donc pas à craindre que, placé sous un pareil contrôle, ce Ministre puisse sacrifier les intérêts généraux de l'Empire à la poursuite de tel ou tel but particulier.

En revanche, le Gouvernement s'est énergiquement opposé à ce qu'on établisse en Galicie une administration responsable devant la seule diète de la province, parceque dans ce cas on pourrait, en effet, appréhendre que des intérêts spécialement polonais fussent mis au-dessus des intérêts généraux de l'Empire.

Cet exemple prouve à quel point nous sommes attentifs à ne pas fournir de grief légitime aux Puissances voisines, et à ne laisser accorder aux sujets polonais de l'Empereur que des droits leur assurant une grande autonomie administrative, mais ne leur permettant pas d'exercer une influence séparée et directe sur l'attitude politique de l'Empire. Le besoin de la paix extérieure et le désir de la conserver sont trop vivement sentis chez nous pour que nous voulions courir le risque des aventures. Nous pesons et continuerons donc de peser avec soin les mesures que nous prenons à l'intérieur de l'Empire, de façon à éviter toute cause de conflit avec nos voisins. Mais tout en étant bien décidés à observer sous ce rapport une grande prudence, nous devons cependant nous réserver la pleine liberté de modifier nos institutions et notre système administratif selon les exigences de notre situation. Nous ne pouvons admettre que de pareils changements justifient de la part des Puissances étrangères une attitude de méfiance.

Je crois qu'en examinant la question telle que je viens de la développer, on devra reconnaître que nous n'avons aucun reproche à nous faire, et que nous n'avons pu éveiller aucune susceptibilité légitime.

Nous allons encore donner dans ce moment un témoignage assez marquant de notre désir d'entretenir avec la Russie des relations amicales. L'Empereur, notre Auguste Maître, envoie à Varsovie son cousin l'Archiduc Albert pour porter ses compliments à l'Empereur de Russie. Cette démonstration, rehaussée par la haute position personnelle de l'Archiduc, sera, je l'espère, de nature à calmer les appréhensions que l'on aurait pu concevoir sur l'état actuel de nos rapports avec la Russie. Nous ne demandons, je le répète, qu'à vivre dans la meilleure intelligence avec tous nos voisins, et à nous occuper en paix de nos affaires intérieures.

Recevez, etc.

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